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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

Periodic reports of States parties due in 1998

COLOMBIA*

[26 June 1999]

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* For the initial report submitted by the Government of Colombia, see CRC/C/8/Add.3; for the consideration of the initial report by the Committee, see CRC/C/SR.113, 114, 115, 188 and 189.

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I. GENERAL

A. Diagnosis

1. In recent decades, Colombia has paid special attention to the development of children and has taken a number of legislative and institutional measures aimed at improving the prevailing conditions of inequity and lack of access to promotional, preventive and childcare services.

2. The condition of children has improved significantly as a result of these measures, which have included mass vaccination campaigns,[1] the expansion of the Community Welfare Homes scheme, the Plan for the Survival and Development of Children and the Plan for the Universalization of Basic Primary Education.

3. Between 1960 and 1992, the mortality rate for children under five fell from 132 per thousand to 32 per thousand, while the infant mortality rate for children under one year of age fell from 82 per thousand to 30 per thousand.[2]

4. For primary education, net coverage rose from 50 per cent in 1950 to 85 per cent in 1994. Meanwhile, in the period 1965-1989, overall malnutrition fell from 21.1 per cent to 10.1 per cent, while chronic malnutrition dropped from 31.9 per cent to 16.6 per cent and acute malnutrition from 3.9 per cent to 2.9 per cent.

5. Despite these advances, the following indicators applied when the current presidential term of office began in 1994. In 1995, it was established that 41 per cent of the child population, i.e. 5.9 million children, were below the poverty line and that 15.6 per cent, i.e. 2.2 million, were in a state of extreme poverty. In many cases, the social risks faced by the child population were aggravated by special family circumstances.

6. Poverty affected 26.7 per cent of households and extreme poverty 10.4 per cent, with such households averaging 5.4 and 5.9 persons, respectively, well above the national average of 4.5 persons per household.

7. Unemployment rates were also higher in poor households, whose income amounted to barely one fifth of the income needed to satisfy basic needs. This means that the children of poor homes are more exposed to problems of health, disabilities, malnutrition, lack of schooling, ill-treatment, abandonment and sexual abuse, with the increased risk that such children begin to live permanently in the street and enter into conflict with the law.

8. It was also found that Colombian families had undergone changes in their structure, functions, responsibilities, social roles and values. There was a trend towards smaller family size, a gradual decline of the extended family, lower fertility, an increase in the divorce rate and the number of successive unions, an increasing number of single-parent families and greater equality between the responsibilities and roles of men and women, among others.

9. It was observed that family structure differed according to regions and subregions, urban and rural locations, social strata and ethnic background, so that there is no single family model, but many types of families.[3]

10. The child population continues to face a high risk of death and illness, which is worse in outlying regions of the country and in deprived social groups.[4] It was found that the main dangers to children's health were perinatal illnesses, infectious respiratory and intestinal diseases, trauma and violence, oral health problems and disorders of the sensory organs.

11. The Government was particularly concerned about the frequency of low weight at birth, which was responsible for 38 per cent of perinatal mortality and almost 50 per cent of child mortality, as well as for a high rate of accidents among pre-school and school-age children.

12. It was also observed that the reduction in the average breastfeeding period[5] significantly affected the nutritional and immunological state of infants. It was found that, in infants and pre-school-age children, malnutrition is mainly related to a calorie and protein deficiency and leads to retarded physical growth and learning capacity. The main nutritional effort has traditionally been directed at this group. Nevertheless, in view of the magnitude and severity of nutritional problems in the school-age group, which vary according to the different geographical regions,[6] the programmes benefiting this sector of the population clearly need further support. In addition, significant nutritional and public health problems arise from deficiencies in micronutrients, especially iodine, iron and vitamin A.

13. Iron deficiency, which is the most common, affects children and pregnant women. Endemic goitre and cretinism have reappeared in the country owing to the marketing of non-iodized salt and the lack of any effective system of supervision and control.[7]

14. At the time, the main prevention and nutritional programmes of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) benefited 1.2 million children under 7 years of age, equivalent to 50 per cent of all children in a state of poverty or extreme poverty, and 1.8 million children between the ages of 7 and 14, i.e. 66 per cent of the poorest population in that age group.

15. Thanks to its coverage and focus, the Community Welfare Homes programme is the broadest ranging of all the government schemes to help the poorest child population. By June 1995, the Community Homes were providing the infrastructure for the protection, care and nutrition of almost 900,000 children every year.

16. This programme has had the effect of encouraging women's leadership in community organization and participation, while stimulating the improvement of housing where the programme is conducted. Nevertheless, the shortcomings of the welfare homes were notorious. The daily diet offered only low calorie content and was lacking in basic nutrients.

17. With regard to accommodation, 43 per cent of the homes operated in conditions of overcrowding and 23 per cent in conditions of critical overcrowding.[8]

18. It was also found that, despite efforts to make primary education universal and to expand the coverage of secondary education, the objective of universal basic education, as provided for in the 1991 Constitution, was still far from being achieved.

19. Pre-school education has remained a privilege of children belonging to the more favoured social strata and thousands of children in a state of poverty have no access to such education, owing to restricted quotas or a complete absence of opportunities.

20. The most serious problem was the high drop-out rate among students in the educational system, particularly among low-income children. In addition, 2.4 million children and young people between the ages of 12 and 17 did not attend school at all, educational coverage being particularly limited in rural areas and among low income groups.[9]

21. There has been a serious shortage of data in the country concerning children in especially difficult circumstances. Owing to the low number of complaints and under-registration, whatever data are available are taken from investigations, surveys and estimates made by the various institutions caring for these children and not from systematic records or regular surveys. It is a known fact, however, that the rights of millions of children are in serious jeopardy. Thousands of them are ill-treated, abandoned or obliged to live in the street and to work.

22. In 1991, 25,000 deaths of children under 18 were recorded, 37 per cent of which involved violence.[10] In 1992, an estimated 2 million children were ill-treated (850,000 severely),[11] while, in 1993, the National Forensic Medicine and Forensic Sciences Institute recorded a daily average of 18.2 personal injuries, five cases of sexual abuse and five post-mortem examinations among children under 18. That same year, the Survey on Mental Health and Consumption of Psychoactive Substances[12] showed a 15 per cent occurrence of child ill-treatment.

23. In 1993, ICBF took care of 35,000 children classified as being abandoned or at risk (foundlings, abandoned, ill-treated, exploited and/or disabled). It was estimated that, in 1995, there may have been 15,000 street children and that 60 per cent of those moving around the cities had no alternative to street living.

24. According to 1994 studies on child labour,[13] it was estimated that 1 million children under the age of 14 were working, as were almost 2 million children between the ages of 12 and 17. The informal economy accounted for 80 per cent of those children's activities, while many were performing high-risk tasks. In 1994, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security issued 25,572 work permits to children aged between 12 and 17; this implies that only 1.2 per cent of all the children involved were offered minimum guarantees and working conditions.

25. Many children have to face the consequences of political violence. In 1994, it was estimated that there were around 108,000 families displaced as a result of violence, which included 169,000 children between the ages of 1 and 10 and 200,000 children between the ages of 11 and 20.[14]

26. According to the 1993 National Population Census, 593,546 persons were suffering some form of disability, including 240,912 children under the age of 18, i.e. 40.6 per cent of the total.[15]

27. Since 1992, ICBF has been responsible for the protection and care of children between the ages of 12 and 18 in conflict with the law.[16] In 1993, out of the 19,251 children appearing in court on charges of criminal offences, 13,616 were taken care of in open institutions and

programmes. The remainder were sent back to their families, after a warning to the parents or legal representatives or the imposition of various restrictions on the young person's behaviour. The survey identified 32,400 active court cases involving children under 18 as either principal offenders or participants.[17]

B. Childcare policies

28. As soon as it was informed of the critical diagnosis concerning children, the Government of President Ernesto Samper submitted the programme El Tiempo de los Niños (Time for Children) for the consideration and approval of the National Council for Economic and Social Policy (CONPES).[18] This programme sets out the Government's childcare policy, designed especially to help children in a state of poverty or in especially difficult circumstances, with a view to improving their quality of life and effectively guaranteeing their rights to survival, protection, development and participation.

29. The programme El Tiempo de los Niños was developed within the framework of the present Government's development plan El Salto Social (The Social Leap). This broader programme is an attempt to consolidate the upheaval recently experienced by the country and to ensure that it leads in the end to a more peaceful and equitable society, united in a process of dynamic and sustainable economic development, whose final objective is to shape a new type of economically more productive Colombian citizen, one who is socially more aware, who is politically more willing to participate and tolerant, who is more respectful of human rights and, as a result, more peaceful in his or her relations with other citizens, conscious and protective of nature and proud of belonging to Colombia.

30. It was assumed that childcare policies implied the need for intersectoral development, involving not only State institutions, but also local authorities, non-governmental organizations and civil society, in an attempt to strengthen the family and community structures of the most deprived population groups, while trying to ensure that poverty is not "handed down from one generation to the next".

31. The 1991 Constitution established the principle of joint responsibility by the State, society and the family for protecting the rights of the child. At the same time, it established a process of decentralization, aimed at bringing the political and administrative power of the State closer to the population.

32. In the light of these developments, the Government took the following measures: it completed the Children's Covenant; it gave priority to the human rights of children, with special emphasis on those of children affected by the armed conflict; it created the Office of the Juvenile Judge; and it tackled the problem of child labour, the difficult situation of street children and the problems related to child traffic and exploitation. Similarly, following up an earlier commitment, it convened the Regional Summit for Latin American and Caribbean Children, which was held in the city of Cartagena from 28 February to 4 March 1998.

Children's Covenant

33. As part of the policy set out in El Tiempo de los Niños, the Government launched the Children's Covenant as a planning strategy and a key element of its social policy in favour of children. The Covenant involves the active and committed participation of central, regional and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private enterprises and other organizations working for child welfare, as well as the community and social institutions in general.

34. The Children's Covenant aims at an overall improvement in the living conditions of children starting from three basic principles or approaches:

The introduction of cultural change through public awareness, knowledge and training in the rights of children;

The creation of new bodies by the Government, which, like the Office of the Juvenile Judge, watch over the fulfilment of children's rights in all State institutions; the Office should ensure that children's rights are given precedence in all actions and programmes undertaken by the Government;

The development of Plans of Action in Favour of Children (PAFI) at the national, departmental and municipal levels, in support of investment and programming efforts guaranteeing the durability and continuity of childhood programmes.

The human rights of children

35. The protection of children's human rights is part of the overall human rights policy pursued by the Government, in close connection with the programme El Tiempo de los Niños.

36. As part of the same policy, other measures have been taken, such as setting out a legal framework for the protection of human rights and rights of the child, based on stronger cooperation with intergovernmental human rights organizations and on the fulfilment of commitments Colombia has assumed under the covenants and treaties it has signed.

Children affected by the armed conflict

37. In view of the situation of children affected by the armed conflict, the Government has given top priority to humanizing the conflict and to seeking humanitarian agreements with immediate effect to release children from the fighting and save them from becoming war victims.

38. A number of institutions involved in child welfare helped to set up the Vocational Care and Training Programme as part of the development of a special basic and intermediate education programme and they implemented the Resettlement Programme, both intended for children under the age of 18 detached from the conflict.

39. Special care has also been given to children injured by anti-personnel mines, those displaced by internal violence and victims of abduction.

Office of the Juvenile Judge

40. In the pursuit of its policies, the Government has established the Office of the Juvenile Judge in order to guarantee the fulfilment of commitments undertaken for the benefit of children, as well as to protect the rights of children and to apply them in practice, in accordance with the Constitution, the Juvenile Code and the international treaties ratified by Colombia.

Child workers

41. In 1995, the Government set out its National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour and Protection of Young Workers, the main objective of which is to prevent early entry into the labour market.

42. The scheme includes measures of three kinds: prevention of early child labour, rescue of children who are economically exploited or engaged in activities making it difficult for them to attend school or impeding their development and the provision of temporary assistance to ensure that, during their separation from the labour market and the improvement of their living conditions, the children receive sufficient support to guarantee the exercise of their other rights.

Street children

43. In order to deal with the situation of street children, the Plan of Action for the Prevention and Care of Street Children and Adolescents has been launched with a view to creating greater awareness and participation by institutions and society in general.

44. In addition, on the basis of the model sponsored by the World Health Organization, the Office of the First Lady has been developing the project entitled "Analysis and improvement of the living conditions of street children".

Traffic in and exploitation of children

45. With regard to the traffic in children, the Government has set up the Inter-Agency Committee to Combat the Traffic in Women and Children. The objectives of this Committee are: to review the policies implemented to combat this type of traffic and to propose the adoption of programmes and measures to prevent it and to prosecute the sexual exploitation and abuse of and traffic in women and children; to recommend whatever actions, agreements or treaties are required to strengthen international cooperation in the fight against the traffic in women and children; to coordinate the development and introduction of an information and data processing system concerning the activities and movements of national and international criminal networks; and to propose the use of dissemination mechanisms with a view to preventing crimes connected with the traffic in women and children.

Regional Summit for Latin American and Caribbean Children

46. Colombia convened the Regional Summit for Latin American and Caribbean Children pursuant to the commitment it made at the International Forum on the Rights of the Child, held in Paris in 1995, to promote actions in favour of children's rights in the region. The meeting

considered the four most acute problems connected with the situation of children violence within the family, the eradication of child labour, the sexual exploitation of children and children in armed conflict

47 The Summit was attended by the First Ladies of the region and was supported by several international organizations involved in child welfare work, such as UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO, IDB, INTERPOL and OAS, through the Inter-American Children's Institute It was also supported by the Fondation pour l'enfance

48 In view of the magnitude of each of these problems in the various countries, the Summit sought to devise a plan of action to deal with them responsibly, as required by the Convention on the Rights of the Child

49 The Summit agreed on the need to establish diagnoses as a guide for policies, programmes and actions, and to intensify the exchange of successful attempts at intervention through horizontal cooperation in order to ensure that international information exchanges facilitate judicial proceedings and the drafting of stricter international legislation

50 The First Ladies signed an undertaking in which they emphasized the need to apply the Convention on the Rights of the Child, commitments already made, declarations, resolutions and agreements, and the need to take national, bilateral and multilateral measures wherever necessary to prevent any aggravation of problems affecting children In their undertaking, they agreed to foster cooperation between States and civil society in order to combat these problems and to strengthen the role of the family in the protection of childhood, to promote development measures and the management of projects aimed at comprehensive care, to support the development of national legislation, to promote coordination between government institutions and civil organizations, and to continue to support the development of policies for the elimination of poverty, improving the quality of life, improving education and health systems and supporting families in their productive and reproductive tasks

Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF)

51 In addition to the above programmes, ICBF, an organization working for the protection and harmonious development of the family, the protection of children and the guarantee of children's rights, put forward a series of policies for the period 1994-1998, the development and implementation of which the Committee may evaluate in this report

52 Where children are concerned, all these policies have followed a holistic approach, starting from the recognition of the family as an all-embracing concept and of the local authority as the agent of social policy and participation by civil society The policies are being developed through three major investment programmes, set out in El Salto Social as follows

Mobilization for children;

Protection, development and well-being of children;

Special programmes for children in irregular situations

Objectives of the policy on children's issues

53. The following are the objectives of the policy on children's issues:

To contribute to the comprehensive development of the poorest and most vulnerable children by bringing them within the purview of the principal nutrition, health and education programmes and encouraging families and the community to take responsibility for and become involved in activities aimed at children's welfare;

To improve the quality of existing services for the poorest children through decentralization and the establishment of effective partnerships with non-governmental organizations and civil society;

To bring about changes in the attitudes and practices of individuals, families and institutions, aimed at prevention and care in cases of the ill-treatment, abandonment, abuse and sexual exploitation of children, the eradication of dangerous work for children and the discouragement of child labour in general and the integration of street children into family or community structures;

To create a child-friendly culture which recognizes the differences and diversity of the youngest members of the population and involves the family, State and different sectors of society in their survival, development, protection and participation in order to meet their basic needs, help them attain full and harmonious development and ensure that they achieve their maximum potential.

54. In pursuance of the objectives of the El Salto Social, the Children's Covenant was designed as a joint working strategy for Government institutions, society and the family in a series of participatory processes intended to guarantee children's well-being. The Covenant basically combines the will of the Government and civil society, the technical formulation of plans of action, the coordination of publicly and privately sponsored children's programmes and the introduction of follow-up and monitoring systems to ensure that children's rights are enforced, within the framework of the Government's social policy.

55. The goal is to raise society's awareness of the conditions under which children live; confirm and stimulate the commitment of the State, society and the family to improving those conditions; promote planning processes aimed at achieving objectives through coordinated actions among the sectors involved; and contribute to children's comprehensive development.

C. Achievements

56. The Government's policies, backed by a significant financial effort, have led to fundamental achievements - as will be seen throughout the report - of which the following are worthy of mention.

57. The political decision to give priority to social spending, as reflected by the increase in investment in this sector, led to the reduction of the size of the population with unmet basic needs, from 32.7 per cent to 27 per cent in 1997 (1.4 million fewer poor people with unmet basic

needs). It also reflected a greater share of spending on this group within the social spending category of the national budget, equivalent to 49 per cent. This increase in investment can also be seen in the progress achieved in providing services to children in the last four years.

58. During this four-year period, the share of child-related items in the social budget was 17 per cent, equivalent to Col$ 1.3 billion. The budgetary shares of the most representative programmes were as follows during this period: Welfare Homes, 61 per cent, protection and development of children, 16 per cent, and children in an irregular situation, 12.4 per cent.

59. Most of the programmes described above are the responsibility of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, whose services were expanded in the last four years to cover 6.8 million users, representing 76.2 per cent of children under 7, and 83.7 per cent of children 7 to 18, requiring assistance. It should be noted that the coverage of protection programmes has been expanded substantially as a result of improvements in identifying users.

60. The share of the national budget allocated to education increased by 178 per cent during the period 1994-1998; it rose from Col$ 2.01 billion in 1994 to Col$ 5.6 billion in 1998, for an average share of 20.2 per cent in the total national budget. The share of education spending in GDP during this period rose by 0.87 per cent, from 3.48 per cent to 4.35 per cent. These financial efforts led to significant achievements both in the expansion of coverage and the improvement of educational quality.

61. In the last four years, educational opportunities were expanded to cover more than 1,700,000 children and young people. Of these places, approximately 1,120,000 are the result of efforts by the Government and slightly more than 580,000 were due to efforts by private, partially State-subsidized educational establishments.

62. As will be observed in more detail, educational coverage has increased as follows: from 1993 to 1997, the rate of primary school promotion for the nation as a whole rose from 81.8 per cent to 83.5 per cent, while the rate of secondary school promotion rose from 78.5 per cent to 84.2 per cent.

63. The total national drop-out rate for both the primary and secondary levels for the period 1993-1997 decreased from 7.4 per cent to 6.4 per cent and from 7.0 per cent to 3.0 per cent, respectively. The repeat rate evolved similarly: the national rate for the primary level dropped from 10.8 per cent to 10.0 per cent and, for the secondary level, from 14.5 per cent to 12.8 per cent.

64. Significant achievements were also made in eradicating child labour, both in removing children from the labour sector and shortening workdays for those who continue to work, and in dealing with specific sectors which are especially critical because of their dangerous working conditions.

65. As will be seen in more detail, from 1992 to 1996, the specific labour-force participation rate for young people from 14 to 17 years of age in the traditional labour sector dropped from 31.2 per cent to 25.9 per cent, or 17 per cent, while the specific rate for young people 12 to 13 years of age dropped from 12.8 per cent in 1992 to 9.9 per cent in 1996, or 22.7 per cent.

66. With regard to the workday, the 38-hour work week of young men 12 to 13 years of age in 1992 dropped to 32 in 1996 and from 39 to 36 for women in the same age group. For young workers in older age groups, there were also decreases in labour intensity for most of the groups observed. For young women 14 to 15 years of age, for example, the number of hours worked per week dropped from 44.6 to 39.8.

67. The Government of Colombia has paid special attention to the situation of children working in coalmines. A programme conducted jointly by Ecocarbón and the Ministry of Mines and Energy has so far succeeded in removing 753 of the 1,124 young people working in this sector, or 67 per cent, and providing them with alternative training and their families with financial support. The objective of the programme is to remove all children from such activities by 1999.

68. Concerning nutrition, although the consolidated figures for 1998 are not yet available, it can be said that, from 1989 to 1995, malnutrition among children decreased as follows: overall malnutrition: 1989: 10.10 per cent; 1995: 8.4 per cent; chronic malnutrition: 1989: 16.6 per cent; 1995: 15.0 per cent; acute malnutrition: 1989: 2.9 per cent; 1995: 1.4 per cent.

69. The indicators concerning the eradication of violence against children are also favourable. In 1991, the child abuse index was 15 per cent; the figure for 1996 decreased to 5.36 per cent. In 1991, 37 per cent of deaths of children under 18 years of age were due to violence and, in 1995, 12.62 per cent of deaths among children from 5 to 14 years of age were due to violence and 18.82 per cent to accidents.

II. PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

70. This chapter describes the activities carried out by the Government to promote and ensure the well-being of Colombian children and make progress towards the full implementation of the rights set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Articles 2 and 3

Respect for the rights of the child, implementation of the Convention without distinction of any kind and protection and welfare of children

71. For information concerning respect for the rights provided for in the Convention on the prohibition of any form of discrimination and the obligation to take account of the best interests of the child in all circumstances, the Committee is referred to the first periodic report of Colombia to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, submitted in 1993.

72. All Government action must take place on the basis of the constitutional provision which stipulates that "the rights of children shall take precedence over the rights of others", a constitutional directive which has been incorporated into the Juvenile Code, article 20 of which states:

> "Individuals and public and private bodies conducting programmes or having responsibility in the area of children's affairs shall ensure that the best interests of the child are given priority over any other consideration."

73. Colombia's legal order stipulates that parents are responsible for the rearing, education and personal care of their children and for guaranteeing their full and harmonious development. If parents or guardians should fail to meet these obligations, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) initially provides consultancy, guidance, counselling, conciliation and protection services, through the Family Ombudsmen. It does so through its zonal centres (of which there are a total of 203) located in the 33 regions into which the country has been divided for this purpose.

74. When parents or others responsible for children fail permanently or temporarily to fulfil their obligations, the State provides protection through ICBF in the form of programmes in institutional settings, family settings and open settings.

75. ICBF provides care for all those under its coverage, through a programme entitled "prevention project". The project's main objective is to help improve the living conditions of children, young people and families by carrying out comprehensive activities of a preventive nature and ensuring active participation by users, sound community organization and the strengthening of the self-management process. The children's programmes sponsored by the prevention project in the last four years have primarily been aimed at socio-economically vulnerable population sectors, as follows:

Participants in the prevention project

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997
Supplementary care for schoolchildren and adolescents	2 038 795	2 115 103	2 062 897	2 582 183
Protection of children through Community Welfare Homes	1 289 190	1 291 605	1 322 850	1 418 220
Nutritional activities for mothers and children	287 283	299 111	293 191	275 746
Protection of children under seven	174 904	177 674	173 952	163 342
Distribution of food vouchers for pre-school-age children	0	82 812	85 310	86 420
Comprehensive assistance for young people through youth clubs	0	12 675	35 455	41 295
TOTAL	3 790 172	3 978 980	3 973 655	4 567 206

76. To ensure that institutions, services and establishments responsible for the care and protection of children meet the required quality standards, a selection and contracting process was introduced in 1997 for institutions providing the Government with protection services for an initial two-year period; this made it possible to select the institutions which meet the highest standards in terms of technical, financial and human resources, basic services and physical plant in order to guarantee appropriate services for meeting the needs identified. A clear and precise instrument is currently being drafted to be used in monitoring the institutions contracted through the public bidding and contracting process.

77. Contracts have also been concluded with the Antonio Restrepo Barco Foundation, co-funded by UNICEF, to define "quality and optimization standards for the process of the protection of children and adolescents" and ensure continuity for the process of "self-assessment and strengthening of protection and rehabilitation institutions". They are an effective means of formulating clear objectives for the institutional protection of the rights of the child.

Article 4

Legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights of children

78. In accordance with the 1991 Constitution and the current Government's policies, the legal and institutional framework for services to children has been expanded since the preceding report, information on which is provided below in order to facilitate the Committee's consideration of this report.

79. In the legal sphere, the following steps have been taken:

(a) Act No. 173 of 1994, by which Colombia acceded to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. A draft legislative decree was prepared and is currently being processed, designed to obtain greater cooperation from both the judicial and administrative authorities; it defines mandatory time limits, jurisdiction, functions and procedural aspects, with a view to ensuring the proper implementation of the Convention.

(b) ICBF also took decision No. 1399 of 18 May 1998 establishing the internal procedure for the implementation of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and designed an application form under the Convention for users when acting as requested authority.

(c) Act No. 294 of 16 July 1996 relating to domestic violence. Its purpose is to give effect to article 4, paragraph 5, of the Constitution by providing comprehensive treatment for domestic violence in all its forms in an effort to ensure harmony and unity within the family. It establishes a procedure enabling the victim or any other individual to apply to a family judge for a protection measure. The procedure in question is brief and effective and provides for measures designed to protect abused families. New criminal offences have also been defined, as follows:

Article 22: physical or psychological intra-family abuse not constituting another offence;

Article 23: aggravated personal injury;

Article 24: ill-treatment through restriction of liberty;

Article 25: sexual violence between spouses;

Articles 26 and 27: aggravating circumstances.

The Act entrusts the Colombian Family Welfare Institute with the designing of policies, plans and programmes to prevent and eradicate domestic violence.

(d) Act No. 311 of 12 August 1996 "establishing the National Family Protection Register and enacting other provisions". The National Family Protection Register is a list which is to include the names and respective identity and residence papers, if known, of anyone who, without just cause, avoids meeting his legal obligation to provide maintenance for his minor children and adult children so entitled because of special circumstances, i.e. they are students or are physically or mentally disabled.

(e) Act No. 375 of 4 July 1997 or Children's Act. Its purpose is to establish an institutional framework and guidance for policies, plans and programmes sponsored by the State and civil society on behalf of children. For the purposes of the Act, young people are defined as all individuals between the ages of 14 and 26.

(f) Act No. 361 of 1997 establishing mechanisms for the social integration of persons with limitations. The principles on which it is based are contained in articles 13, 47, 54 and 68 of the Constitution. It recognizes the right of persons with severe and extensive limitations to assistance and protection, in view of the dignity to which they are entitled. In implementing the Act, ICBF has worked on projects in 23 regions and nine agencies, including the 204 zonal centres throughout the country.

(g) Act No. 418 of 1997, which embodies principles for life in society. It contains articles covering admission to mandatory military service at the end of secondary school, as stipulated by Colombian legislation in Act No. 48 of 1993.

(h) Presidential Decree No. 859, which establishes the Inter-Agency Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers.

(i) Decision of the Board of Directors of the Asociación Nacional de Industriales (ANDI), which sets forth rules of behaviour for its members aimed at preventing and eradicating work by children and young people.

(j) Decision No. 0061 of 30 May 1997 by the Office of the Procurator-General of the Nation designating departmental juvenile and family procurators and municipal representatives as juvenile judges.

80. The following new agencies have been added to the institutional framework:

(a) Office of the Juvenile Judge. Colombia is the first country to have created this Office, which is designed to act as a government agency on behalf of the Government to ensure, on a preventive basis, that every government programme or activity fulfils its commitments towards children, protects them and gives priority to their rights, as stipulated in the Constitution, the Juvenile Code and the international covenants ratified by Colombia. The duties of the Office of the Juvenile Judge are: to raise the awareness of State agencies in finding ways to improve children's welfare; and ensure that this policy guides all government plans, programmes and projects in meeting their objectives. The Office of the Juvenile Judge is also responsible for identifying, coordinating and enhancing the effectiveness of activities and information relating to achievements and shortcomings in carrying out work on behalf of children and working towards a consensus on granting priority to children's services. Lastly, it is responsible for identifying the rights most often violated, for the purpose of reordering priorities in children's programmes. There are now juvenile judges in all departments of the country and these functions are also performed by the heads of departmental planning divisions and legal offices. The Colombian Family Welfare Institute also includes a juvenile judge in each and every one of its regional offices.

(b) Office of the Local Attorney for the Rights of Children, Young People, Women and the Elderly. This is a new institutional body which is responsible for carrying out activities to promote and defend human rights; it is attached to the Ombudsman's Office.

(c) National System for the Follow-up and Monitoring of Children's Rights. In coordination with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Ombudsman's Office and the Higher Education Foundation (FES), an inter-agency working agreement for promoting, disseminating, monitoring and exercising the human rights of Colombian children was established in 1992. The follow-up and monitoring system provides the Ombudsman's Office with timely and reliably attested local, regional and national information on the enforcement of children's rights and enables it to make recommendations to the authorities and individuals, conduct research of a socio-legal and technical nature and develop policies for the protection of children's rights. Four pamphlets have been issued on the results of the research.

(d) National System of Action to Combat Child Abuse. The System was established in late 1997 under the coordination of the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Social Policy. It seeks to meet existing challenges by establishing an inter-agency coordination system comprising bodies with national coverage and competence in working on behalf of children. It also seeks to build a unified information system on cases of child abuse in Colombia and to review existing legislation and streamline and adapt the administrative process for the reporting and treatment of cases.

(e) Inter-Agency Committee to Combat the Traffic in Women and Children. Established by Decree No. 1974 of 31 October 1996, the Committee's task is to review policies and propose programmes and measures to prevent and punish offences relating to the traffic in women and children. It recommends action to be taken and agreements or treaties to be adopted to strengthen international cooperation in this area.

81. Its activities have made it possible to build international support networks at the policy level and establish a methodology for organizing a database on the cases investigated, raise the awareness of the public, public officials and the authorities of these offences and of Act No. 360, which expands the penalties for committing them, improve treatment systems for victims through the establishment of direct lines and conduct support workshops for the victims of sex offences.

82. The Committee's management was able to streamline the legislative process for the adoption of four related agreements and expedite the preparation of explanatory introductions to three bills adopting three other agreements.

83. The Committee suggested that the Hemispheric Action Plan proposed by Colombia at the Summit of the Americas should be adopted and that the Latin American countries should vote as a bloc to adopt the draft International Convention against the Smuggling of Illegal Migrants in the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

84. It has designed two pamphlets on preventing, halting and punishing the traffic in persons and is planning the preparation of a third.

85. The national education budget increased by 178 per cent during the period 1994-1998, rising from Col$ 2.01 billion in 1994 to Col$ 5.6 billion in 1998, for an average share of 20.2 per cent in the overall national budget

86. The share of education spending in GDP during this period rose by 0.87 per cent, from 3.48 per cent to 4.35 per cent.

Articles 5, 9 and 18

Rights and duties of parents

87. With regard to the rights, duties and obligations of parents under the Colombian constitutional and legal system, the Committee is referred to Colombia's first report, submitted in 1993. Concerning other forms of extended and community-based families, see Colombia's eighth and ninth reports on measures taken to eliminate racial discrimination, submitted on 15 June 1998.

88. In addition to its work with families in crisis and at risk, which will be described below, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute has an extensive outreach programme of activities which are designed to protect and strengthen the family and which convey outspoken messages with educational and awareness-raising content, based on a human-rights and gender-equality approach, by means of large-scale media campaigns and alternative means of communication at the national, regional and local levels in order to help strengthen the family and Colombian society as a whole.

89. Article 44 of the Constitution states that one of the fundamental rights of the child is the right to have a family and not be separated from it. The Constitutional Court has endeavoured to make this right effective by upholding it in its case law.

90. The Juvenile Code states that children should be cared for by their family, relatives, guardians or representatives, but that, when the latter are unable to fulfil this obligation, the State may assume responsibility in their place.

91. Part VI of Colombia's first report, "Family environment and alternative care", discussed aspects relating to the presence of the parents, parental responsibilities, separation from parents, family reunification when separation from parents has occurred, lack of family environment, etc.

92. In order to ensure that parents fulfil their obligations satisfactorily, ICBF carries out preventive and support activities based on training or family life, schools for parents, strengthening of values and information campaigns on the rights and duties of parents.

93. If the parents fail to fulfil their obligations, ICBF, through the Family Ombudsmen, takes extrajudicial action to resolve difficulties through conciliation; where agreement cannot be reached, ICBF, acting in the best interests of the child, institutes civil proceedings in the family courts or family courts of mixed jurisdiction.

94. In cases of failure to fulfil obligations, the State, through ICBF, acts to protect children by taking protective measures in accordance with Part One, articles 29 to 128, of the Juvenile Code.

95. If children are separated from their parents, ICBF assumes responsibility for their protection.

96. With regard to family reunification, Title V, articles 337 to 348, of the Juvenile Code, as reproduced in the initial report, contain information on permission for minors to leave the country. The provisions in question ensure that minors are always accompanied by persons authorized to do so.

97. ICBF is also responsible for the protection of children abroad, in cooperation with Colombia's embassies and consulates abroad, as stated in article 328 of the Juvenile Code.

98. In cases where the child's separation from his parents is due to irregular situations - such as abandonment; temporary or permanent absence or moral or mental incapacity of persons having legal responsibility for him; failure, within a reasonable time, to collect the child from a hospital or other institution to which the child has been admitted; sexual abuse or physical ill-treatment; evidence of serious problems of behaviour or social maladjustment; or the existence of serious friction between the parents which threaten the child's mental or physical health - ICBF, through the Family Ombudsman of the place where the minor is living, must report the irregular or dangerous situation and assume responsibility for the minor's immediate protection.

99. The Family Ombudsman institutes the protection procedure and recommends measures for each case, as follows:

Preventive measures or a warning to the parents or to the persons responsible for the child;

Placement of the child in the custody or in the personal care of the nearest relative who is in a position to assume this responsibility;

Family placement;

Full care in a Special Protection Centre;

Institution of proceedings for the adoption of the child if the latter has been declared to be abandoned (this is the only measure which may not be called for in the order initiating the inquiry).

100. Article 42 of the Constitution embodies the guiding principles concerning Colombian families, one of the basic tenets of which is equality of rights and duties. Articles 250 et seq. of the Civil Code contain the provisions relating to rights and obligations between parents and children and equal rights and duties between parents. Articles 133 et seq. of the Juvenile Code refer to maintenance obligations towards children under 18 years of age. Failure to provide maintenance was raised to the rank of an offence (Penal Code, art. 263).

Articles 6, 7 and 8

Rights of the child to life, nationality and identity

101. The measures of protection of the inherent right to life and the rights to an identity, a nationality and family relations provided for by the Constitution and the Colombian legal system were described in the initial report submitted to the Committee.

102. The protection of the right of the child to life is a constant concern of the Government and involves a commitment to safeguard the country's future and one of its most valuable assets. The Government has therefore endeavoured to ensure that everyone throughout Colombian territory has the possibility of a full life.

103. This was a key aspect of the adoption of the policy defined in El Tiempo de los Niños and, consequently, assistance to and the protection of children and their lives were carried out through the Comprehensive Human Rights Policy and the Children's Covenant.

104. These projects, to which reference has already been made, cover all activities to guarantee the right of children to life and protection.

105. This right is provided for in programmes relating to the exclusion of minors from armed conflict and to care and support for those who break away from irregular armed groups, as well as for victims, displaced children, street children and child victims of kidnapping and the traffic in persons.

106. It is also a key element of the programmes that the Government has set in motion in connection with health (prevention of teenage pregnancies, prevention of disease, improvement of living conditions), security (programme for the elimination of child labour) and education (better knowledge of children's rights, raising awareness of the importance of respecting children's rights).

107. The national civil registry and identity card campaign was carried out in 1997 with a view to improving the protection of the right of the child to be registered immediately after birth and to have a name, an identity and a nationality. This programme reached the remotest communities in the country. A second campaign that is now being carried out will cover indigenous children born as of January 1998.

108. By carrying out these campaigns, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute is trying to increase the number of birth registrations. A birth certificate is regarded as a vital document because it enables minors without civil registration to have a legal identity.

109. With UNICEF's support, the National Civil Registry Office published a handbook for the registration of indigenous minors. This campaign was extended to the border area with Ecuador, where a handbook published with the support of UNICEF and ICBF was distributed in Colombia and with the National Children's and Family Institute and the National Civil Registry Office, in Ecuador.

110. As part of the plan being implemented by the National Administrative Department for Statistics (DANE), to modernize the civil registry and vital statistics system, the National Civil Registry Office, the Notary and Registration Monitoring Office and the Ministry of Health prepared new background information formats for live birth and death certificates, the documents required for the registration of births and deaths. Efforts are thus being made to standardize medical certificates and halt identity document forgery and falsification.

111. With regard to the right of the child to know and be cared for by his parents, procedures have been worked out for determining paternity and maternity in cases where parents have not assumed responsibility for their children. Genetic DNA paternity tests are thus being used throughout the country, which has been divided into macro-regions.

112. The Atlantic Coast region covers the departments of Guajira, San Andrés, Atlántico, Bolívar, Cesar, Córdoba and Sucre, through a contract concluded by ICBF and laboratories belonging to non-profit public sector entities, such as the University of Cartagena. Antioquia and Chocó are covered by the University of Antioquia; the University del Valle laboratory covers Valle del Cauca. The University Sur Colombiana covers Huila, Tolima and Caquetá. The departments of Boyacá, Norte de Santander, Santander and Casanare are covered by the Industrial University of Santander. The National Forensic Medicine and Forensic Sciences Institute covers the Capital District and the department of Cundinamarca. Cauca, Nariño and Putumayo are covered by the University of Cauca and Pereira Technological University covers the departments of Risaralda, Quindío and Caldas. ICBF is updating, monitoring and evaluating the scientific practices involved in such tests.

Articles 10, 11 and 22

Family reunification, illicit transfer and refugees

113. As indicated in the preceding report, Colombian legislation adequately regulates permits issued to allow minors aged under 18 to leave the country, in accordance with the provisions of the Juvenile Code and, in particular, articles 337 and 338, which state that the Family Ombudsman grants permits to leave the country to children whose circumstances so require (Juvenile Code, arts. 337 et seq.).

114. Colombia is a party to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction of 25 October 1980, which was ratified by Act No. 173 of 1994 and entered into force in the country on 1 March 1996.

115. As a party to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, Colombia is committed to guaranteeing and safeguarding rights which relate to the protection of refugees, including minors.

116. The Advisory Committee for the Determination of Refugee Status was set up in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to handle asylum and refugee status applications. Since 1993, the Committee has granted asylum to 75 persons who are nationals of various countries.

Articles 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16

Freedom of opinion, expression, thought, conscience, religion and association

117. The constitutional and legal provisions which guarantee the rights to freedom of expression, thought, conscience, religion and association and the right to privacy are referred to in the initial report of Colombia to the Committee.

118. Colombia's ninth and tenth periodic reports on measures adopted for the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination, which contain further information in this regard, are also being made available to the Committee.

119. With regard to the realization of the right of children to freedom of thought, it was pointed out in the initial report that this is one of the least recognized rights in the Colombian cultural context because, in many cases, the child is regarded not as someone capable of interpreting the world and his experiences on his own knowledge, but, rather, as being subject to the views and approaches of his parents, relatives and the other adults around him. Through its agencies, the Government has therefore been waging a broad media campaign to increase awareness of this problem, on the basis of article 10 of the Juvenile Code, which is reproduced in the preceding report.

120. In accordance with the provisions of the General Education Act, considerable emphasis has been placed on the democratization of power structures and, consequently, on school

participation through the institutionalization of school government, student representation and the collective preparation of the School Coexistence Handbook in 90 per cent of public and private primary and secondary schools in the country (see annexes).

121. Programmes and campaigns are also being implemented by the Ministry of National Education to create and increase awareness of the need to end the armed conflict in the country. The "Peace of a Thousand Days" programme, the "Young Peace Managers" campaign and the "Bolivarian Mobilization for Peace and Life, against Violence, Starting in School" are designed to make schools genuine centres of peace in the remaining days of this century through the promotion and achievement of coexistence and acts of solidarity by the members of the educational community. The acts of peace which are committed every day in schools are simple demonstrations of coexistence, solidarity, love and respect which are designed to awaken students to feelings, virtues and values of peaceful coexistence, democracy and human rights.

122. With regard to the guarantees to which minors are entitled in any judicial and administrative proceedings, we refer the Committee to the initial report submitted by Colombia and to the text on this question mentioned below.

123. Pursuant to the programme on "Training in Values for Family Coexistence", ICBF has carried out the following activities through the mass media and informal educational processes in the 204 zonal centres:

> Training of 2,500 outreach workers for the project entitled "The children of Colombia travel throughout Colombia", which is designed to strengthen national identity and respect for the country's ethnic diversity;
>
> Training of 3,300 outreach workers in 33 cities in connection with the education course which is entitled "Love will flourish in Colombia" and is designed to encourage people to think about the principles of coexistence: respect, tolerance, comprehension, acceptance, freedom and love;
>
> Making and broadcasting of a television series consisting of 16 30-minute programmes which are shown at peak times on a national television station and are designed to make families think about the commitment of being parents, the parent-children relationship, conflict management and the principles of coexistence. This material was distributed to the 204 zonal centres to be worked on in video-forums with community groups;
>
> National mobilization entitled "Children for Peace": civic activities carried out in 33 regions in October 1997 with Community Welfare Homes, kindergartens, family educators, etc.;
>
> Establishment of the "Family educator"; at present, ICBF has 402 educators in 14 regions who deal with about 18,000 family groups; its function is to create educational processes for the peaceful coexistence of family groups, provide instruction for conflict management and make human rights a reality in everyday family life; Schools for parents: ICBF has 820 schools for parents throughout the country at the present time.

Articles 17, 29, 30 and 31

Access to information, personality development, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, rest, leisure and regard for minorities

Youth policies

124. The promulgation of Act No. 375 of 1997 was promoted by means of a broad movement of cooperation not only between the Government and the Congress, but also between them and over 6,000 youth movements and groups which played an active role in the drafting of the text adopted.

125. In order to strengthen local management in respect of young people, all mayors in the country were given information about the process of institutionalization, inter-agency coordination and management to integrate local youth policy into development plans. Twenty youth municipal councils were established in this way.

126. The following programmes are being carried out in connection with the objectives set and for the purpose of meeting the needs of this population group:

Productive development of minors

127. A work training programme was designed to broaden and improve young peoples' job opportunities and a training strategy was worked out for the benefit of 5,000 young people. Agreements were also concluded and counselling services set up with national training agencies, the National Apprenticeship Service (SENA), the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and private sector organizations.

Young people and drug prevention

128. In order to deal with the use of psychoactive substances by broad sectors of the youth population of the country, the programme promoted activities to prevent such use in high risk areas, particularly urban areas. Thus, 27 youth homes were set up in 14 cities and youth initiative projects were established in 10 cities for the benefit of 50,000 out-of-school young people. The project on the educator training network for the prevention of drug abuse and the inclusion of prevention in curricula was also developed for 200,000 students, 5,000 teachers, 50,000 parents and 200 educational establishments. Funds amounting to Col$ 2,050 million were invested in these projects.

129. The Ministry of Communications is implementing the "link project" to set up lines of communication to solve the drug problem. As a result, it has been publishing the Network Bulletin, which is intended for agencies working in this area and for young people and adolescents. It describes ways of preventing drug dependency and strategies to overcome the problem of drug addiction.

Youth tourism and environment

130. This project was consolidated as a training strategy relating to harmonious coexistence, nature appreciation and the appreciation of Colombian culture and traditions. As a result of the investment of Col$ 276 million, the service has seven tourist hostels in the cities of Cartagena, Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, Popayán, San Agustín and Villavicencio where 100,000 young people have stayed.

Youth card

131. The "Youth Card Programme" was established to enable young people to obtain discounts, special offers and advantages when using and purchasing goods and services in connection with art, culture, sports, business, tourism, health and education. It was made available to 300,000 young people, had Col$ 1,909 million in funding and was definitively established by the Youth Act.

National sexual education project

132. For the purpose of contributing to the growth and sexual development of children and young people at school and outside school, strategies were implemented for training and the strengthening of self-esteem, autonomy, coexistence and health, thereby ensuring that sexual knowledge, attitudes and conduct are experienced in a more genuine, responsible, gratifying and ethical way. This programme was made available to 1 million students, 2,000 teachers and 3,000 public schools. The Government invested Col$ 1 million in its design and development.

Youth organization and participation programme

133. The programme was designed to strengthen various youth organization experiences and to promote the mechanisms that the 1991 Constitution, the Youth Act and the Government have established to provide for youth events and participation in civil society. The programme covered 150,000 young people throughout the country.

Youth information centres

134. This programme is being implemented in the cities of Medellín, Cali, Cúcuta, Barranquilla, Pereira, Riohacha and Bucaramanga to give young people access to information enabling them to take part in various sectors of society and to give them further opportunities for full development. These information centres have been designed to benefit a population of 2 million young people.

Integrated services projects for young people

135. In order to offer sectoral opportunities for young people, a pilot project was carried out with 16 pre-selected cities (Pasto, Popayán, Cali, Palmira, Medellín, Manizales, Pereira, Cúcuta, Bucaramanga, Barrancabermeja, Santa Marta, Cartagena, Quibdó, Florencia, Ibagué and Sogamoso), of which 8 will be chosen to establish a local integrated services model for young people in urban and rural areas.

Education for democracy and human rights

136. A number of programmes that intersect with the formal curriculum have been established to ensure the full development of children and young people.

Education for democracy

137. Efforts are being made to help establish a democratic culture in schools by creating critical thinking processes and discussions of values, knowledge, attitudes and day-to-day conduct in all areas of school life; to promote the construction of ethical and political elements of analysis and thinking about a culture of democracy which will help train people who are tolerant, willing to participate, community minded, autonomous and respectful of human rights; to promote and support the preparation, analysis and revision of handbooks on coexistence based on classroom covenants; and to design teaching strategies for the understanding and peaceful settlement of disputes. These efforts are also related to the Institutional Education Project (PEI) and, within that project, to the machinery for participation provided for in Act No. 115 of 1994.

138. In the past four years, activities have been carried out in connection with technical assistance, research and the preparation of materials, including: the follow up and evaluation of the 12 pilot projects on "democracy in schools" which were implemented in the departments of Boyacá, Santander, Cesar and the capital, Santa Fe de Bogotá, for the benefit of 4,340 students, 4,932 parents and 178 teachers; research on "guardianship and education" and "approaches to democracy and inclusion in school textbooks"; and the preparation of six documents on the school press, the press, radio and technology, teaching in the use of the media, the preparation of four stories on peace and coexistence and the production of a video film on tolerance.

139. Work was done with the National Civil Registry Office, as stated above, on the preparation of registration cards for indigenous minors and minors living in border areas. Work was also done with the Office of the President of the Republic on the rights of children and young people in the context of the PEI. Workshops were organized in 28 departments and "conferences" were held with teachers, teachers' committees and supervisors on the coexistence handbook, classroom covenants and school representatives. There was participation in the organization and holding of the National Meeting of Student Representatives at the Twenty-first Century Forum-Fair. Advice and support were given for the holding of workshops for the care of displaced children, young people and adults in the communities of Pavarandó, Turbo and Mutatá.

Teaching of values

140. General Education Act No. 115 of 1994 added a new basic and compulsory subject to the curriculum: ethics and human values. In order to teach this subject, it was necessary to hold a large meeting of national and foreign teachers and experts, whose participation and cooperation led to the drafting of the guidelines which will serve as a basis for the regions and for schools in drawing up their curricula. In the next phase, the document will be taken to the regions for discussion and the establishment of technical teams responsible for training teachers in classroom research and the preparation of support materials.

Teaching the Constitution and democracy

141. Teaching citizens about the country's Constitution (civics) is a component of the social sciences field of study which has, because of its importance, become a cross-sectional part of the curriculum. The preparation of guidelines has been completed and their dissemination and teacher training are beginning.

Environmental education

142. This programme, which began in 1991, has focused on the design and establishment of strategies which take account of the country's social, cultural and natural characteristics. It is intended to have a direct impact on the training of persons and communities in order to promote an appropriate relationship with the environment in the context of sustainable human development.

143. The programme is specifically designed to support the participation of the educational community; to train regional and local lead educators; to train regional outreach workers; to produce and distribute teaching materials; to form a team to provide technical assistance to community agencies; to promote joint inter-agency and intersectoral cooperation, planning and evaluation; to promote the analysis and management of regional and local environmental diagnoses; to organize systems to be developed in the regions through school environmental projects; and to identify environmental training components that are easy to make more widely available and to determine which ones are strictly individual so that the general guidelines of the national environmental education policy can be constantly reformulated.

144. Different projects have been established so far, including: school environmental collectives; the experimental environmental education proposal for large cities; the UNESCO TSS1 project for the definition of national environmental education policy guidelines; the proposal for the inclusion of environmental education in compulsory military service; the project on the "incorporation of the environmental dimension in basic education in urban areas"; and the project on the "incorporation of the environmental dimension in basic education in rural and small urban areas".

145. The programme's achievements include: the drafting and discussion of Decree No. 1743 of 1994 on environmental education; training through seminars, workshops, lectures, accompaniment and technical assistance for major projects and other local activities; follow-up of the school projects process through pilot projects to observe major advances in environmental education; establishment of a network of national environmental education teachers and outreach workers; consolidation of the project on the "incorporation of the environmental dimension in basic education in rural and small urban areas"; and the production and publication of teaching materials on environmental topics, such as "The Scheme of Things", "The Wounded Earth", "Return to Earth", "The Environmental Dimension as a Challenge for Education in the New Society", "The Earth Workshop (Gaia hypothesis)", "Penca de Sábila - An Alternative for Environmental Education", "Environmental Education in Schools" (vols. I and II), "History of and projections for environmental education in the Ministry of Education", "Our City of Bogotá", "Our City of Cartagena", "Our Medellín" and "Time for a humanizing education".

Information and communications media

146. With a view to improving the quality of education and affording broader access to information, the Colombia educational system has been incorporating new technologies and bilingualism in public education.

147. The National Data Processing and Bilingualism Programme of the Ministry of National Education (MEN) will enable official technical baccalaureate students and professors to develop computer skills and know-how, to improve their knowledge of English, to have broader learning opportunities in other areas and to have access to the most advanced scientific and technical information in the world through the "information superhighway".

148. The programme involves the installation, in secondary schools, of a computer room with the requisite furnishings and the latest technology consisting of 15 microcomputers with multimedia and a server that are connected to the local network and the Internet. Educational software is also installed, including software in English.

149. In the first phase, the Ministry of National Education allocated Col$ 37,103 million in two stages for 756 classrooms in the same number of official technical high schools located in about 430 municipalities in the country. There are over 500,000 low-income students in these schools.

A new educational television

150. Also as a result of systematic efforts to incorporate new technologies into education and to study television in order to improve its quality and broaden access to knowledge, the "Espacio Maestro" programme was brought into service by Señal Colombia, the cultural channel of the National Radio and Television Institute. It broadcasts 30 hours a week of the best nationally and internationally produced series for children and young people, from pre-school to university.

151. The second phase of the "Story Hour" series has also been completed; it is designed to stimulate children's interest in reading and has been selected to compete in the best children's television contests in the world.

152. The Ministry sponsored the making of the series entitled "Tierra Posible", which is designed to give teachers human rights training and is composed of 30 parts that have been presented at various international television trade fairs.

153. Since 1977, Señal Colombia has been showing the "Education Community", a television news programme which is designed to enable Colombians to understand exactly what is happening in the field of education. It involves everyone who takes part in the educational process: policy-makers, teachers, parents, students and trade unions.

Communication project for children

154. The Ministry of Communications is implementing the "Communication for Children" project with the support of UNICEF and the Colombian Cooperation Agency. Its main objective

is the design and implementation of communications strategies which will benefit Colombian children and encourage adults to respect their rights. The document entitled "Communcation Programme for Children" is annexed to this report.

ICBF communication programmes

155. At present, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute is carrying out the following media activities:

> The Carlos Lleras Restrepo Family Welfare Prize for messages on values: recognizes written, visual, audio and audio-visual messages which promote values through the various communications media;
>
> Publication of 10 collectible copies of the magazine Estimulación Adecuada in El Espectador, a national newspaper with a daily print run of 156,000 copies per issue. The magazine's aim is to strengthen informal education processes based on a sound family environment;
>
> Publication of 12 collectible copies of the magazine La Familia in El Espectador, the national newspaper with a daily print run of 156,000 copies per issue. The magazine covers a variety of topics relating to the family, values training and ways of thinking;
>
> Broadcast of 10 programmes in the "Cuestión de Amor" series by a national television station. It focuses on topics such as encouragement, school, adolescence and conflict management;
>
> Television lectures: broadcast of eight television lectures on topics of civic and educational interest, each one lasting one hour and a half; the potential audience is invited in advance to take part in the programme;
>
> Protection agencies have been promoting the project entitled "Play spaces: creative and cooperative play environments as a window on the world for children in the protection programme" with the cooperation of the University of the Andes and the Rafael Pombo Foundation; it is being carried out at the Santa Fe de Bogotá ICBF regional office. The aim is to take it to other regional offices once the pilot phase has been completed.

156. At present, ICBF is working on the design and implementation of educational environments based on creative and cooperative mini play worlds which creatively rebuild the human potential of children and the members of organizations linked to the protection programme.

157. With regard to the rights of indigenous children to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion and to use their own language, we refer the Committee to the eighth and ninth periodic reports of Colombia on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which describe the progress made in implementing these rights.

Article 28

Right to education

158. The Government recognizes the right of children to education so that it may be exercised gradually under conditions guaranteeing equal opportunities. Article 27 of the Constitution provides that education is a fundamental right and that the State guarantees freedom of instruction, learning, research and teaching. In accordance with this mandate, the Government has been implementing programmes that focus on increasing coverage and improving the quality of secondary education. These programmes are being carried out at the national and at the various regional levels.

159. The educational development plan for this period, called "The leap in education: education as the key to the country's development", established four strategies for the universalization of education:

1. Student-centred education as a basic instrument for improving quality;

2. A new administrative organization model focusing on school organization;

3. A result-oriented system for the allocation of resources;

4. Broader coverage and greater fairness.

160. The Ten-Year Education Plan (1996-2005) is the best means of guaranteeing the continuity of educational policies and activities. It has created a culture of participation by all sectors of society and the educational community.

161. In keeping with the Leap in Education, the Ten-Year Plan establishes 10 major objectives relating basically to the improvement of educational quality and coverage.

162. In order to achieve the objectives and targets of these plans, the following programmes have been formulated:

Institutional Education Project (PEI)

163. This is the core of all the programmes for the improvement of educational quality. It takes the form of an ongoing process of human and institutional development that is designed to create appropriate environments for "growing and being and learning and changing which combine intentions and actions in a lively and dynamic organization that aims to improve the quality of life of each and every one of the members of the educational community". It is a forum for dialogue, construction, thought and discussion. It is now being implemented in 90 per cent of the country's schools.

164. In seeking to achieve these objectives, constant advice and support have been given to the 36 education secretariats in the departments; 577 weak institutions have been strengthened in the formulation of their projects; an incentive of Col$ 5,800,000 was granted to each of the

200 institutions with an outstanding PEI; 200 very outstanding experiments were identified and presented at the national level as models; and 40,000 copies of the following documents were published: "Consideration of Institutional Education Projects" and "Guide for the Formulation of Operational Plans, PEI Guidelines, the PEI Building Process and the PEI Evaluation Guide".

Promotion of active education

165. In order to promote this process, it was initially determined that textbooks had to be made available in classrooms because they play a very important role as far as the poorest sectors of the population are concerned.

166. In 1996, 3,500,000 language notebooks were distributed in official schools and 15,200,000 sets of natural and social science text books worth Col$ 15,600,000 were distributed in 1997. Seven million children have benefited from the distribution of these materials.

167. Fifty thousand "learning packages" called "jaibaná", which means "learned" in the Embera language,[19] costing Col$ 9,598 million (unit cost: Col$ 191,960) have been distributed to 42,978 schools (35,909 in rural areas and 7,069 in urban areas) in 1,072 municipalities in the country. The packages contain educational support materials, instructional games and teaching materials, which will be the key to the learning process for over 4 million children in official primary education.

Education Resource Centres

> In 1994, the Ministry of National Education suggested that local authorities should include Educational Resource Centres (CRE) in School Educational Resource Centres (CREP) and Municipal Educational Resource Centres (CREM) as a strategy enabling them to rationalize investments and optimize the use of educational materials.
>
> In order to obtain financial resources to implement this strategy, local authorities had to formulate investment projects which formed part of the National Co-financing System headed by the Social Investment Fund (SIF) and were used to co-finance the purchase of materials to set up 827 CRE at a cost of Col$ 19,500 million, in addition to the co-financing of resources.

Strengthening the pre-school system

168. This process began with the establishment of "Grade 0" in public schools.

169. On the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the situation at this level in 1997, Decree No. 2247 was drafted and enacted to regulate all aspects of this grade.

170. This programme promotes and develops pre-service and in-service training activities for departmental, municipal and district pre-school teams and teachers and management staff involved in pre-school education; concludes agreements with governmental and

non-governmental organizations to promote the quality of life of pre-school children; and encourages local authorities to promote and support pre-school education in their development plans.

171. As part of the technical assistance and financial support activities carried out, the implementation of the compulsory pre-school grade, known as "grade 0 or the transition grade", was achieved through projects co-financed with FIS in 750 municipalities in 32 departments and four special districts for the benefit of 221,531 students in 7,433 classrooms.

172. The process of building up written and oral language skills was strengthened in 28 schools which have a "grade 0". The process of creating PEI was strengthened in 12 schools and discussion groups were organized on experience of the inclusion of disabled children in regular classes from the transition grade to grade 9.

173. The following documents were published: "A curriculum proposal for grade 0: political, conceptual and pedagogical frameworks"; "Building written language and mathematical skills in grade 0"; and "Understanding the pre-school educational level from the viewpoint of the General Education Act".

Improvement of internal efficiency indicators

174. Internal efficiency indicators have improved significantly, with an increase in promotions and a decline in repeat and dropout rates. At the national level, the primary school promotion rate rose from 81.8 per cent to 83.5 per cent from 1993 to 1997 and the secondary school rate went from 78.5 per cent to 84.2 per cent during the same period. In 1997, the promotion rate in the official and unofficial sectors was 81.5 per cent and 91.4 per cent, i.e. an increase of 1.8 points in the official sector and 1.5 points in the unofficial sector compared to 1993; the secondary school promotion rate increased by 3.2 points in the official sector, from 77.7 per cent to 80.9 per cent, and, in the unofficial sector, by three points, from 82.2 per cent to 85.2 per cent.

175. The national total dropout rate for the period 1993-1997 in primary and secondary schools went from 7.4 per cent to 6.4 per cent and from 7.0 per cent to 3.0 per cent, respectively. This analysis by sector showed that, in primary schools, the drop was 1.1 per cent in both the official and the unofficial sectors, where it remained stable at rates of 7.4 per cent and 2.6 per cent, comparatively. In secondary schools, the dropout rate in the official sector went from 6.4 per cent to 5.2 per cent and, in the unofficial sector, from 5.2 per cent to 3.4 per cent.

176. The repeat rate was similar to the dropout rate. At the national level in primary schools, it fell from 10.8 per cent to 10.0 per cent and, in secondary schools, from 14.5 per cent to 12.8 per cent between 1993 and 1997; by sectors, the change was similar to that for the national total at the two educational levels.

Increased learning time

177. The length of the school day in basic education institutions will be increased gradually and will depend on what the school governing body decides, based on PEI objectives. This

extension will be possible as a result of measures such as the gradual increase from 3.5 to 6 hours of class per day and educational activities during free periods in sports and cultural facilities, Municipal Educational Resource Centres and language and computer laboratories.

Improvement of the professional and social status of educators

178. In connection with the policy of the improvement of the professional status of educators, Decree No. 0709 of 1996 provided for the establishment of the Local Training Committees, one of whose functions is to design, implement and evaluate periodic training plans for teachers in accordance with regional, local and institutional needs and national educational development policies and programmes.

179. The Ten-Year Plan provided for the structuring of the national training and comprehensive development system for educators, including regulations on the conversion of normal schools to advanced normal schools; made available an instrument for guaranteeing the quality of teacher training through the formulation of basic conditions for the establishment and functioning of the academic pre-grade and post-grade curriculum; created and consolidated a financial fund to support the upgrading and professionalization of teachers in the service of the State, which trained 20,420 basic primary teachers in language and 4,800 basic secondary teachers in mathematics and provided support for the pre-grade training of 15,000 educators and the advanced training of 4,600; granted Col$ 19,600 million in incentives to 32,667 teachers in the same number of schools; started the programme for the construction of social, recreational and training premises with a view to helping improve the social wellbeing and quality of life of teachers; and substantially improved their salaries to bring them into line with those of workers in professional posts.

Institutionalization of educational evaluation

180. In accordance with the constitutional obligation to guarantee the quality of education and in view of the importance of evaluation in a country in the process of decentralization, the General Education Act provides for the establishment of a "national evaluation system", which serves as a basis for policies and plans to improve education.

181. The action carried out includes:

> The design and application of a national sample of basic primary and secondary schools and students. It involves the assessment of the learning of children and adolescents from a sample of 240,000 third to fifth grade primary and seventh to ninth grade secondary students; institutional self-evaluation; evaluation of teaching and teachers; and a competitive examination for educators for entry into government service. Mathematics, language and related subjects were evaluated in 1997 through the use of these tests of learning achievements. Prior to the use of these tests, it was necessary to design a theoretical framework and related-factor instruments for principals and schools, teachers, students and parents. The tests were given to 100,000 third to fifth grade children on shift A in basic primary school; 7,000 teachers of these grades; 3,000 schools, 3,000 principals and 100,000 parents.

Institutional evaluation. The "Self-Evaluation and Institutional Improvement Guide" was prepared in 1997 and sent to all educational establishments in the country to provide guidelines for the school management evaluation process.

Results. Documents for language and mathematics teachers and documents on mathematics and language achievement-related factors in grades 3 to 5 were published and distributed to 50,000 schools in the country.

Institutionalization of continuous and flexible school promotion. The achievements evaluation implies continuous and flexible promotion, i.e. promotion which may take place within the same grade or from one grade to another at the end of the year and which can be "early" or "late", so that traditional ideas of "losing a year", "passing" and "repeating" become meaningless. Promotion is determined only by the achievement of PEI objectives. It requires a greater commitment by education officials (administrators, teachers, students and parents), who are responsible for guaranteeing the quality of education. It is not a mechanically applied formula, but it does have the advantage of reversing the trend towards expelling students and of making use of various types of aids and opportunities for supplementary efforts.

182. In order to explain the interpretation of the new evaluation approach to teachers, administrators and students, the Ministry of Education prepared and distributed 100,000 copies of the book entitled "Evaluation in the classroom and beyond", which it sent to Education Secretariats and all educational establishments in the country in 1997.

Schools

183. As the key to educational reform, schools need the support of local, regional and national educational authorities. The project on the strengthening of schools involved:

Incentives for schools. In 1996, the best school in each educational core group was selected on the basis of an evaluation by the educational communities themselves. Each one received Col$ 10 million. In all, 1,928 establishments received a total amount of Col$ 1,280 million. The resources were intended for infrastructure improvement, the establishment of school grants and funding for teacher training courses.

Project to improve the classroom environment. In order to help improve the quality of education by strengthening schools and implementing the programmes provided for in El Salto Educativo, the Government began to support all official urban primary schools in 1997 by contributing Col$ 5,800,000 from the national budget; such support from teaching services funds will be used to purchase educational equipment and materials which will be selected by the School Board concerned from the "indicative list of educational equipment and materials" prepared by the Ministry of National Education. The benefits of the project may be assessed in qualitative terms on the basis of achievements by schools, education departments and departmental accounting units. In terms of quantity, 3,994 urban primary schools were involved, with an investment of Col$ 23,165.2 million, in April 1998.

Teaching services funds. In order to provide support for schools in managing teaching services funds, budget and accounting handbooks have been prepared and made available to groups of administrators at five workshops that have been held so far.

Formulation of technical standards for the design of school buildings, school furniture and textbook presentation. The Ministry of Education signed agreements with the Colombian Technical Standards Institute (ICONTEC) for the preparation of 10 standards on the production of furniture, 10 on school infrastructure and 3 on school textbook presentation.

Broadening educational coverage

184. Opportunities to enter and stay in the school system have been broadened by creating places, granting subsidies, applying policies designed to prevent drop-outs, expanding school infrastructure and concluding service contracts with non-profit organizations for the creation of places in schools.

185. In the past four years, educational opportunities have been made available to over 1,700,000 children and adolescents. Of these places, about 1,120,000 are the result of action by the Government, the departments, districts and municipalities, while slightly more than 580,000 correspond to efforts by private education, financed in part with State subsidies.

Increase in school enrolment by level and sector 1994-1998

Level and sector	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	Increase 1994-1998
Total pre-school	613,459	779,923	919,680	1,021,056	1,116.063	502,604
Official	283,295	384,859	453,862	503,891	564,975	281,680
Unofficial	330,164	395,064	465,818	517,165	551,088	220,924
Total primary	4,808,414	4,908,918	5,011,767	5,117,023	5,224,747	416,333
Official	3,821.442	3,880,664	3,941,037	4,002,590	4,065,350	243,908
Unofficial	986.972	1,028,254	1,070,730	1,114,433	1,159,397	172,425
Total secondary	3,485,938	3,668,666	3,861,055	4,063,621	4,276,904	790,966
Official	2,287,029	2,423,540	2,568,123	2,721,254	2,883,433	596,404
Unofficial	1,198,909	1,245,126	1,292,932	1,342,367	1,393,471	194,562
Total - three levels	8,907,811	9,357,507	9,792,502	10,201,700	10,617,714	1,709,903
Official	6,391,766	6,689,063	6,963,022	7,227,735	7,513,758	1,121,992
Unofficial	2,516,045	2,668,444	2,829,480	2,973,965	3,103,956	587,911

186. In order to bolster the improvement of educational coverage and quality, the Government has taken or is taking out loans from the multilateral bank.

Plan for the Universalization of Basic Primary Education (IBRD loan No. 3010-Co)

187. In keeping with the Government's social policy, the Ministry of National Education opted in 1997 for a second loan for the Universalization Plan from the World Bank. The programme will cost $169.2 million, 59 per cent in the form of loans (Government, 34 per cent, departments, 1 per cent, and municipalities, 6 per cent). The Plan, which was signed in 1989, should have ended in 1995, but, because of circumstances, it was extended three times; the last extension ended in March 1998.

188. With regard to the aim of improving the quality of education, one of the most important direct results of the evaluation of the Plan is the positive impact of the distribution during the implementation phase of some 25 million textbooks, desks for 1,286,000 students (25 per cent of the official education total), 570,000 packages of school supplies and bookshelves, filing cabinets and instructional games.

189. With regard to coverage, an annual weighted average growth rate of 3.15 per cent was calculated for the period 1990-1994. On the basis of a similar performance by the sector in the following three years (1995-1997), the total increase for 1990-1997 would be 22.0 per cent, i.e. 2.02 points higher than the target proposed by the Universalization Plan (ACR, 20 per cent).

190. Attention is drawn to the increased use of the Escuela Nueva method in rural areas and to the fact that depressed and isolated areas have been reached with basic elements of the improvement of educational quality.

191. About 80 per cent of the Plan's investment was used to improve students' environmental and teaching conditions, which have been identified as one of the key factors in school drop-out and repeat rates.

192. The evaluation also confirms that the Plan achieved the objective of focusing primarily on rural, urban slum and indigenous schools.

193. In referring to the Escuela Nueva programme, UNICEF stated that it "is proof that flexible, non-conventional education can get rural children into school and keep them there" and described it as a model for other countries.[20]

Programme to expand the coverage and improve the quality of secondary education (PACES). IBRD loan No. 3683-Co

194. The objective is to expand the coverage, improve the quality and strengthen the administration of secondary and intermediate education and provide incentives for regional and municipal governments in support of educational development objectives in 86 municipalities and 4 districts which have been targeted. The programme is being implemented with funding from Municipal Education Plans (PEM) and Institutional Education Projects (PEI).

195. The targeting of municipalities was decided when the programme was designed (1992-1993) and was based on the criteria of greater basic primary education coverage and greater demand for secondary education, in line with the situation in Colombia's large cities and surrounding municipalities.

196. The programme cost is $150 million, with World Bank financing of $90 million and a matching amount of $60 million. The loan contract was signed on 9 August 1994 and entered into force on 28 March 1995. The completion date is 31 December 2000.

197. In the three years during which the programme has been implemented, funding has been provided for 89 projects to expand and build physical plant, thereby adding 9,395 places to the number the State can offer, and conditions in 285 schools have been improved for the benefit of 16, 686 students already enrolled.

198. Subsidies have enabled 24,773 first-level and second-level students to gain access to secondary and intermediate education in private schools; 399 official educational establishments have received funds to formulate the PEI for the purpose of increasing the quality of education through textbook purchases, educational inputs, teacher training, the improvement of physical plant, the development of the educational community and the improvement of school administration; 10 universities and NGOs have also been working with local authorities with a view to the institutional strengthening of the provision of educational services at the municipal and institutional levels.

Programmes to strengthen education management and formulation of a policy and a strategy for the development of education in the rural sector

199. The stage reached is that of negotiations with the World Bank and the technical formulation of the proposal.

Legislative advances relating to education

200. The higher education public service was organized by Act No. 30 of 1992. A body of legislation was prepared with a view to the achievement of its objectives.

201. The General Education Act is contained in Act No. 115 of 1994. With a view to making progress in the implementation of this Act, 30 decrees and regulatory decisions were adopted during the period under review, including:

> Decree No. 196 of 1995 on teachers' membership of or affiliation with the National Teaching Profession Social Benefits Fund, which is designed to deal with local authorities' debts;
>
> Decree No. 804 of 1995, which offers curriculum guidance on providing educational assistance for ethnic groups which is based on their cultural characteristics and designed to teach respect for their linguistic diversity; it defines requirements for the training of ethno-educators and their relationship with the public education service;

Decree No. 1719 of 1995, which lays down standards and procedures for the preparation and formulation of the Ten-Year Educational Development Plan;

Decree No. 114 of 1996, which contains general regulations for the provision of informal education through labour, academic, citizen participation and community programmes and programmes to prepare for the accreditation of formal education levels and grades;

Decree No. 2082 of 1996, which contains general rules for the education of persons with exceptional limitations or abilities, taking account of their particular characteristics;

Decision No. 2343 of 1996, which adopts general guidelines for curriculum processes of the public education service and establishes indicators of curriculum achievements for formal education according to subject area; it also defines training for each level and cycle of education;

Decree No. 2247 of 1997, which describes administrative and teaching mechanisms for the organization of the pre-school level; provides curriculum guidelines for the definition of lesson plans and learning evaluation; and prohibits the use of entry examinations for schools offering pre-school education;

Decree No. 2368 of 1997, which contains rules relating to the evaluation process that must be used in all private formal education establishments as a requirement for the authorization of registration and boarding rates.

Articles 19, 34, 35, 36 and 39

Protection against all forms of physical, mental and sexual abuse and exploitation, abduction, sales of or traffic in children, physical and psychological recovery of child victims and their social reintegration

202. The Juvenile Code, i.e. Decree No. 2733/89, establishes procedures for providing protection for minors in the situations described in articles 19, 34, 35, 36 and 39 of the Convention.

203. These rules authorize the Family Ombudsman to take protective measures prior to the relevant administrative proceedings and the penalties laid down in the Penal Code (see preceding report).

204. In the performance of its functions, ICBF provides full care for children in family, open and institutional environments, based on the technical specifications referred to below.

Population	Action - result
1. Children and adolescents without family or in danger	Protection agencies under contract until 1997 Residential = 5,814 places for 8,721 children Cost: Col$ 16,079,286,000 Semi-residential = 1,896 places for 2,844 children Cost: Col$ 2,887,364,000 Foster homes = 6,894 places for 13,788 children. Cost: Col$ 12,912,885,000
2. Children and adolescents subjected to ill-treament	Networks for the prevention of ill-treatment 220 networks in operation
3. Sexually exploited children and adolescents	Services contracted at different stages in the project. 623 places for 13,293 children and adolescents. Cost: Col$ 1,124,782,000
4. Child and adolescent victims of the armed conflict	Discussions with authorities Project design Formulation of the contingency plan for the separation of 2,000 children Care provided by protection agencies and homes and rehabilitation institutions
5. Child and adolescent victims of forced displacement	Updating of regional diagnoses Training of officials Expansion of coverage of prevention and protection programmes for children and families Food supplies Involvement of groups from the Psychosocial Intervention Project in Settlements Investment in 1996-1998: Col$ 3,410,300,000

Population	Action - result
6. Chile and adolescent workers	Care for 1,200 young persons in 8 homes for the promotion of social and labour market integration; 165 units for care in an open environment for 19,128 children Total investment: Col$ 5,224,800,000
7. Street children	Care of 15,192 street children with an investment of Col$ 768,796,000
8. Children and adolescents who are disabled, abandoned and in danger	Rehabilitation institutions 4,431 places in 108 institutions Cost: Col$ 11,646,758,000 Special foster homes 1,945 homes for 2,293 children Cost: Col$ 4,769,293,000
9. Child and adolescent drug users	16 drug treatment units, 513 places Cost: Col$ 1,389,458,000
10. Minors in conflict with the law	Institutions for re-education and other types of care 26,034 minors Cost: Col$ 16,760,801,000
11. Pregnant teenagers	8 institutions for the care of 566 pregnant teenagers, 283 places Cost: Col$ 772,407,000

205. In 1998, ICBF will conduct an investigation in cooperation with the National Advisory Centre to carry out a qualitative and quantitative measurement of the frequency of child ill-treatment (in accordance with recommendation No. 10 by the Committee).

206. Research has also been carried out on the following topics: study of children and armed conflict; study on family structure; and study on recognition and protection of ethnic and cultural diversity. A survey was also carried out on the situation of children and adolescents in cooperation with the National Administrative Department for Statistics (DANE), the Ministry of Health and the Higher Education Foundation.

207. The Plan of Action in favour of the Rights of Sexually Exploited Children and against Child Sexual Exploitation was formulated in connection with the eradication of the scourge of child prostitution.

Inter-Agency Committee to Combat the Traffic in Women and Children

208. For the purpose of eradicating the traffic and trade in human beings, the Inter-Agency Committee to Combat the Traffic in Women and Children was set up by Decree No. 1974 of 31 October 1996 and is chaired by the Minister or Deputy Minister of Justice and Law and composed of government and State agencies concerned with the problem and the Director of INTERPOL in Colombia. The Juvenile Judge attends the meetings of this Committee as a permanent guest.

209. Following the establishment of this Committee, an exploratory study was carried out to describe the various types of offences of this kind, which are difficult to define universally. This study includes a legal analysis of Colombian legislation on the traffic in persons and the conventions, covenants, agreements and other international instruments adopted by Colombia.

210. Since its establishment, the Committee has set up international police support networks through INTERPOL and has proposed a method for systematically organizing the database on the cases under investigation. It has taken on the task of making public opinion and the authorities aware of such offences and of Act No. 360, which increases the applicable penalties. It has tried to improve systems of care for the victims and the institutions which take care of persons who are victims of such offences have therefore set up direct lines.

211. The Committee suggested the adoption of the Hemispheric Action Plan proposed by Colombia at the Summit of the Americas held in April 1998 in Chile. It also suggested that there should be a block vote for the adoption of the International Convention against the Smuggling of Illegal Immigrants proposed by the delegation of Austria in Vienna at the eighth session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the first half of 1998.

212. Action by the Committee helped to simplify legislative procedures for the adoption of the 1949 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, and the 1994 Inter-American Convention on International Traffic in Minors. It also led to the submission to Congress of the explanatory introduction to draft Act No. 87 of 1997 approving the Inter-American Convention on International Traffic in Minors.

213. As a result of the Committee's action, consideration is also being given to the explanatory introductions to three draft acts approving the 1989 Inter-American Convention on the International Return of Children, the 1949 United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others and the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.

214. The Committee has encouraged the holding of national workshops to increase the awareness of law enforcement officials and, on its recommendation, the Social Security Institute will hold workshops to provide support for victims of sexual offences.

215. The aim for 1998 is to prepare a third pamphlet on preventing, halting and punishing the trafficking in persons.

Colombia without prostitution

216. The National Police is also implementing the programme entitled "Colombia without prostitution", whose main objective is the gradual elimination of child prostitution through family and community educational activities to create processes of human and social development with minors involved in prostitution and with their families in order to safeguard values, potential and rights through comprehensive assistance programmes.

217. This operation will be carried out at the national level with the participation of the Office of the Juvenile and Family Procurator, ICBF, the Forensic Medicine and Forensic Sciences Institute and some NGOs. It is being carried out in two stages: the prevention and information stage and the operational or implementation stage.

218. Excellent results are being achieved and the programme has been well received by the community. It monitors public establishments, identifying minors and placing them at the disposal of protection agencies; carries out social and community education campaigns; and strengthens and carries out activities to approach the population which engages in prostitution through educational and training programmes designed to improve their living conditions and refer them to State-run programmes.

219. In fulfilment of Act No. 360, ICBF has opened a pilot centre for the treatment of child victims of sexual abuse which provides comprehensive, short-term care through all State agencies having competence to deal with cases of sexual abuse. The pilot centre is located in the city of Santa Fe de Bogotá. Similar centres are being planned in other cities.

220. In schools throughout the country, the Ministry of National Education implements projects on family planning (1992-1998) and sex education (since 1994), which have helped to inform and train children and young people on subjects relating to sexual and reproductive health (aimed especially at preventing teenage pregnancies) and gender equality and sexual rights. During this period, 300 training workshops were held for young people and adults to enable them to act as agents of change. Fifty thousand pamphlets on the prevention of teenage pregnancies and 150,000 handbooks on family planning for parents, teachers and administrators were published and distributed nation-wide. One-hundred and fifty subprojects on the prevention of teenage pregnancies were organized in 150 educational establishments to serve as a basis for further experiments.

221. Through the Presidential Programme for the Defence of Personal Liberty, an office was established to deal with the problem of abduction. Since 1993, the office has been conducting psychosocial treatment programmes for children who have been the victims of abduction or whose relatives have been abducted. This programme is being carried out in several departmental capitals.

222. A plan for the prevention of child abduction is also being designed and is to be carried out in coordination with the psychological treatment component.

Action to eradicate child prostitution

August 1996 - July 1997

Department	Registered establishments	Measure applied to the establishment			Complaint against manager and/or owner	Minors found		Age range		Measure applied to minors		Repeat offenders - total
		Closure for 7 days	Closure for 30 days	Definitive closure		Boys	Girls	7 to 14	15 to 18	Placement at the disposal of ICBF	Return to family	
AMAZONAS	13	2					5		5	5		
ANTIOQUIA	91	2	5		1	7	17	4	20	17	7	
ARAUCA	45	2					6	2	4	6		
ATLANTICO	109	25	3	1		43	76	32	87	53	66	31
BOLIVAR	56	8	3			3	17	3	17	10	10	
BOYACA	39	14			1	30	42	14	58	48	24	48
CALDAS	76	8	1		6	2	21	4	19	5	18	
CAQUETA	40	3	1			2	10	1	11	2	10	
DECAS	10						1		1		1	
CAUCA	33	2	1				8	4	4	6	2	
CESAR	49	8			4		6		6	4	2	
CORDOBA	36	11		1		18	7		25	9	16	
CUNDINAMARCA	73	10	1			6	14	5	15	3	17	3
CHOCO	38	2				1	3		4		4	
GUAJIRA	49	1				2	1		3		3	
DEGUN	3											
GUAVIARE												
HUILA	370	142	21	1	1	187	192	10	339	90	259	76
MAGDALENA	74	7	4		1	6	17	2	21	9	14	
META	49	5	3			3	20	2	21	11	12	
NARIÑO	65					2			2		2	
NORTE DE SANTANDER	64	16	1		3	5	37	7	35	23	19	
PUTUMAYO	25	8	2		8	13	17	3	27	9	21	1
QUINDIO	77	42				50	54	45	59	5	99	4
RISARALDA	53	4	2			6	19	2	23	11	14	
SANTANDER	57	14	2		1	3	40	2	41	31	12	
SAN ANDRES Y PROV	35											

Department	Registered establishments	Measure applied to the establishment			Complaint against manager and/or owner	Minors found		Age range		Measure applied to minors		Repeat offenders - total
		Closure for 7 days	Closure for 30 days	Definitive closure		Boys	Girls	7 to 14	15 to 18	Placement at the disposal of ICBF	Return to family	
SUCRE	39	1					17		17	17		
TOLIMA	59	7	1		4	3	19	3	19	9	13	
URABA	30	2				1	4		5	5		
VALLE	153	13	4			18	41	6	53	23	36	
VAUPES	5											
VICHADA	16	5			20	11	10		21		21	21
BOGOTA	169	28	19			80	35	45	70	95	20	61
CALI	226	10	7		1	17	81	10	88	35	63	3
VALLE DE ABURRA	133	13	9			15	31	9	37	22	24	
ESBOL	49	3	1			2	15	2	15	4	13	
TOTAL	2 508	418	91	3	51	506	883	217	1 172	567	822	268

223. Another programme, covering investigations, judicial proceedings and the rescue of abducted children, is being implemented in coordination with the national police, the Office of the Attorney-General, the Administrative Department for National Security and the national army.

224. Act No. 40 of 19 January, known as the National Statute on Abduction, was adopted in 1993. It sets forth rules defining abduction, the powers of the security bodies and the changes which have been made to the Penal Code concerning the length of sentences for the offence of abduction. Act No. 173 of 22 December, issued in 1994, approved the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, which was signed in The Hague in 1989 and provides for the prompt return of children wrongfully removed to or retained in any contracting State. Act No. 282 of 6 June, which was adopted in 1996 in order to "eradicate certain offences against personal liberty, especially abduction and extortion", established the National Council for Action to Combat Abduction and Other Attacks against Personal Liberty, the Groupos de Acción Unificada por la Libertad Personal (GAULA), the National Fund for the Defence of Personal Liberty and special provisions for the effective punishment of this offence.

Articles 20, 25 and 27

Protection and assistance by the State to children deprived of a family environment, care, protection and treatment of the child's physical or mental health and right to a standard of living adequate for the child's development

225. As mentioned above, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF) is the agency in charge of the care and protection of children whose parents are unable to fulfil their obligations satisfactorily or who are at risk. The characteristics and coverage levels of ICBF's preventive treatment programmes are described below.

Children aged 0-6

226. Comprehensive care for pre-school-age children is designed to be a strategy of preparation for life, aimed at developing children's full potential as human beings: love, understanding, solidarity, mutual respect, freedom and independence. The Community Education Project, prepared with the participation of educators, children, families and the community, was designed to achieve these objectives. The following investment projects are conducted by ICBF under this programme:

Community Welfare Homes;

Children's Homes;

Rural pre-school voucher;

Production and distribution of "Bienestarina" food products.

Community Welfare Homes, 0-6 years

227. The Homes are established through fellowships granted by ICBF to families, so that, working jointly with their neighbours and using local resources to a large extent, they will meet the basic nutrition, health, protection and individual and social development needs of children from low-income sectors. They are designed to strengthen parents' responsibilities in training and caring for their children and community participation in self-management and problem solving by channelling resources and working together for the benefit of children.

228. This programme is being implemented by the families of the beneficiary children, who form parents' associations and other types of community organization and, after obtaining legal capacity, conclude funding contracts with ICBF for administering the resources allocated by the Government together with funds provided by the group.

229. The Homes are meant to operate primarily in the most economically and socially depressed sectors, defined by the System for the Selection of Beneficiaries of Social Investment Projects (SISBEN) as being at levels 1 and 2.

230. The programme is carried out using national resources supplied through ICBF, resources allocated by the local authorities, contributions from families and the community and contributions from public and private natural and legal persons and international organizations.

231. Resources provided by the Government are used to finance the initial endowment, training, fellowships, supervision and evaluation. The fellowship funds are given to community mothers for replenishing the endowment, maintenance and fuel, food rations, teaching materials for the long and short term and support for payment of public services.

232. There are several types of homes: the family homes, multiple homes and company-based homes. The first are under the care of a community mother, while the other two under the responsibility of several mothers chosen by the Parents' Association or the group itself.

233. The Food Support Programme was introduced in 1994 for pre-school-age children receiving care in community welfare homes as a subcomponent of the Programme in its traditional form.

234. The living conditions of all the beneficiaries were improved, to the point where all children receiving assistance in community homes were provided with an average calorie intake of 73 per cent of daily requirements, micronutrient intake of 96 per cent and protein intake of 100 per cent. In addition, "Bienestarina" food products, which supply 7 per cent of daily calorie requirements and 28 per cent of daily protein requirements, are provided at the week-ends; for vacation days a food ration is provided which covers 35 per cent of calorie requirements and 63 per cent of protein requirements.

Community Welfare Homes - Family, women, children (FAMI)

235. This programme consists of activities aimed at prevention in the health area, protection, socialization, nutrition and the strengthening of the emotional bond between mothers, fathers and children. It was established to support families and the community in identifying and meeting needs in rearing children under two years of age.

236. The FAMI module of the Community Welfare Homes cares for children under two years of age from pregnancy onwards and is aimed at fostering their development as human beings and improving their quality of life. Accordingly, the same module services both families with pregnant mothers, breastfeeding mothers, and families in development, the latter defined as family units which participate in and accompany the development process of their members from pregnancy onwards.

237. The Homes are made up of 15 families in development, comprising pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and children under two for each household. Care is thus provided for 30 users consisting of children and adults through a Community Education Group composed of the 15 families in development.

238. This module operates under the responsibility of a Community Mother in her home, on community-provided premises and in the home of the user family, when home visits are made.

239. Under the health system, the care of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers is coordinated in an effort to prevent and control diseases related to their physiological condition and to monitor pre-natal checkups, care during pregnancy and post-partum check-ups, family planning and comprehensive health care for children under two in the growth and development programme.

240. The Community Welfare Homes project 0-6 years has increased its coverage every year since its establishment, as shown in the table below.

Coverage, Community Welfare, Homes

	Module					
Year	0-7 Years		FAMI		Total	
	Number of homes	Coverage	Number of homes	Coverage	Number of homes	Coverage
1987	8 247	123 705			8 247	123 705
1988	23 552	353 280			23 552	353 280
1989	46 450	696 750			46 450	696 750
1990	49 098	736 470			49 098	736 470
1991	55 249	828 735	7 197	215 910	62 446	1 044 645
1992	57 238	858 570	11 283	338 490	68 521	1 197 060
1993	59 638	894 570	13 280	398 400	72 918	1 292 970
1994	59 150	887 250	13 398	401 940	72 548	1 289 190
1995	59 353	890 295	13 377	401 310	72 730	1 291 605
1996	59 068	886 020	14 561	436 830	73 629	1 322 850
1997	61 714	921 870	16 261	492 510	77 975	1 418 220
1998	65 848	987 720	16 261	492 510	82 109	1 480 230

241. One of the objectives of the Community Welfare Homes project is to improve the quality of life of the participating families. Accordingly, a system of housing loans was established for dwellings where the community homes system is in operation. The loans have been granted since 1987 and 61,093 of them have been made available to date, as shown below.

Improvements under Community Welfare Homes

Housing loans

Year	Number of loans	Amount
1988	7 456	1 039 091 935.80
1989	7 007	1 140 413 107.80
1990	6 092	1 220 246 372.80
1991	12 006	3 453 385 393.00
1992	5 398	1 759 829 000.00
1993	8 857	3 874 000 970.00
1994	3 103	1 455 744 080.00
1995	5 903	4 885 463 478.00
1996	4 646	4 960 083 934.00
1997	625	649 288 286.00
1998	5 310	8 658 528 480.00
TOTAL	66 403	33 096 075 037.00

Training of community mothers

242. In an effort to upgrade the training of community mothers in order to bring about a steady improvement in the quality of their work with children and parents, their training has been strengthened in three core areas: early childhood stimulation, promotion and prevention in the health area and physical activities and body awareness.

Early childhood stimulation

243. In order to provide community mothers with theoretical and practical tools to use in their work with families in development, early childhood stimulation is being implemented throughout the country as a framework for introducing the topics of "Comprehensive care for families-to-be" and "Child development from birth to age two". In 1996, 4,004 educational agents were trained and, in 1997, 14,600 FAMI community mothers introduced "early childhood stimulation" to 225,400 families in development. The training was also given to 580 community mothers in the 0-7 module and to 190 surrogate mothers.

Promotion and prevention in the health area

244. To meet its obligation under Act No. 100 of 1993, ICBF conducted a training programme in prevention and promotion in the health area for community mothers in the FAMI and 0-7 modules throughout the country. To date, 73,342 community mothers have been trained to:

Recognize the importance of health promotion in enhancing the quality of life;

Identify and correct risk factors in the family environment and in Community Welfare Homes;

Consult the instruction manual for appropriate advice on how to deal with specific problems;

Act as agents of change for introducing the appropriate methods of prevention and promotion in the health area to the Community Home's user families.

In addition, 10,746 parents from the Bolívar, Quindío and Nariño regions were trained directly in the areas mentioned above.

Physical education and body awareness

245. In order to train community mothers in leading physical activities to help children from two to six years of age learn body awareness and thus strengthen their self-image, 167 educational agents were trained in 1996 in coordination with the Social Solidarity Network's Recreation Programme; the agents then gave such training to 26,480 community mothers in 1997.

Rural voucher for pre-school-age children not covered by the Community Welfare Homes

246. Under this programme, a monthly food supplement in-kind is provided for children from one to seven years of age from extremely poor rural families and the children are brought into supplementary health and education programmes.

247. The programme is designed to improve the nutritional status and health of children under seven years of age living in rural areas and not covered by Community Welfare Homes; priority is given to children of female heads of household and to disabled children. The criteria used for targeting the programme are: highest indices of pre-school morbidity, highest malnutrition rates and commitment by the local Government to carry out health and education activities. A network of families is also being formed to carry out educational activities under the responsibility of an education agent. Nutrition: the food covered by the voucher provides 72 per cent of daily protein requirements and 58 per cent of daily calorie requirements.

Children's Covenant

248. ICBF also helped prepare the Children's Covenant, whose three basic components are:

Children's rights: to guarantee the best conditions for full development, advocacy work being done with a view to creating a child-friendly culture;

Plan of Action for Children (PAFI), established to give effect to the commitment made by Colombia at the World Summit for Children in 1990;

Office of the Juvenile Judge, established by the Government for the purpose of monitoring the implementation of all agreements signed on behalf of children.

249. The Colombian Family Welfare Institute is also participating in the process of decentralizing the Children's Covenant in various territorial entities. More than 20 covenants have been signed and implemented so far.

250. In 1997, ICBF took part in a training plan in the framework of the Children's Covenant organized by the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Social Policy. Workshops are also planned for all departments participating in the Children's Covenant.

Children's Homes

251. The Children's Home is a learning place designed to enhance relations between adults and children, providing an atmosphere which enables children to achieve self-actualization and is conducive to participation in decision-making, the formation of ethical values and the development of their full potential.

252. The Homes carry out activities for children from three months to six years of age, giving priority to the children of working mothers and fathers who are heads of household and belong to the population group with unmet basic needs. Their objective is to foster children's full development, with organized participation by parents, by improving their lives through the enhancement of the quality of their relationships with their families and the other groups making up their social circle, strengthen the family and guarantee children's right to a childhood.

253. In accordance with the comprehensive care approach and current legislation, agencies, local authorities and non-governmental organizations are also involved, as components of the Programme, in the planning and implementation of action on behalf of children and families.

254. Coverage in 1998 is expected to be increased to 163,083 children under seven years of age, with an investment of Col$ 82,989,666.

Five -to-18-year age group

255. ICBF conducts the following projects for children from 5 to 18 years of age:

Supplementary care for schoolchildren and adolescents

256. This programme is a set of activities for the maintenance and improvement of the situation with regard to the food, nutrition and education of school-age children and adolescents with unmet basic needs, both in and out of school in urban, rural and indigenous areas. It targets kindergarten children 5 and 6 years of age, children from 6 to 14 whether or not attending primary school and adolescents from 15 to 18 years old with unmet basic needs.

257. The following services are provided through this project:

Lunch: Food supplement providing a minimum of 30 per cent of recommended daily calories and nutrients;

Fortified supplementary snack: food supplement providing a minimum of 20 per cent of daily calories and nutrients;

Glass of milk: Provision of one glass of milk per day and promotion of health care for beneficiaries in the areas of oral hygiene, visual and auditory care, immunization and elimination of parasites;

Rural school food voucher: Food supplement providing a minimum of 38 per cent of recommended daily calories and nutrients.

The following project activities are being carried out:

Nutritional education;

Assessment of physical growth;

Nutritional assessment;

Food supplements;

High-quality food preparation and supply service;

Health and hygiene;

Industrial safety;

Organization, operation and administration of the food service.

The project's main achievements have been:

Expansion of coverage;

Linkage with private industry for the operation and management of the programme;

Conversion of the simple supplementary snack to a fortified supplementary snack;

Assistance to indigenous children with the lunch module only.

Year	1995	1996	1997
Coverage	2 111 103	2 062 897	2 582 183
Budget (millions of pesos)	28 189	42 012	73 859.1

Comprehensive care for young people through youth clubs

258. This programme involves creating places where young people can meet, work together on projects and socialize according to their interests, needs, aspirations and values and is designed to enhance the development of individual and collective youth projects by strengthening forms of interaction and dialogue which foster peaceful coexistence, respect, solidarity and tolerance.

259. This project is composed of two modules:

Pre-teen clubs: Clubs made up of children from seven to 12 years of age, both attending and not attending school, who are at levels 1 and 2 and in a situation of high psychosocial risk. Special emphasis is placed on children who have been in Community Welfare Homes in order to guarantee continuity of development;

Teen clubs: Clubs made up of children from 13 to 18 years of age, both attending and not attending school. Activities are designed to strengthen participation by young people in social, political and cultural activities in the community, school and municipal contexts.

The activities of the project are the following:

Personal development: discussion groups and projects concerning young people's lives and their relations with family, peer group and milieu;

Youth participation and activities: strengthening, promoting and enhancing the participation of young people at the group, school, community and municipal levels, through the creation of new styles of leadership within communities and the full exercise of democracy;

Communication: promoting the preparation of teaching materials, audiovisual materials, journalistic and literary writings, murals, review of the club's history and proposal of methodologies for youth activities that will support and enhance the work being done;

Strengthening of school performance and socio-labour training: inter-agency coordination activities aimed at enabling members of youth clubs to obtain their primary or secondary diploma, vacation classes in applied arts and crafts to enable them to improve their future quality of life, training in technical subjects, creation of small businesses, encouragement of reinsertion into the school system and devising of mechanisms for keeping young people in school;

Creation and recreation: guiding and encouraging young people's creativity and talent through recreational, musical, athletic and arts-and-crafts activities.

The following have been the project's achievements:

Diagnosis of the project at the national level;

Updating of technical and administrative guidelines in accordance with the situation in each region of the country;

Upgrading of the skills profile of 2,700 youth leaders through two training courses: one on sex education and the other on physical preparation and human values.

Year	1995	1996	1997
Coverage	12 675	35 455	41 295
Budget (millions of pesos)	449.0	3 590.0	5 500.0

Indigenous communities

260. As mentioned above, indigenous communities in Colombia receive care through the following programmes:

Supplementary care for schoolchildren and adolescents; lunch module;

Care for children under seven years of age through the Community Welfare Homes in indigenous communities.

261. The project is currently undergoing an institutional adjustment process geared to the sociocultural characteristics of the 82 indigenous ethnic groups living in the national territory.

Comprehensive care for indigenous families

262. The project focuses on finding resources to foster indigenous production and the culture of indigenous people as an autonomous social group in order to strengthen their economic, social, political and ideological structures. The goal is to pave the way for balanced relations with the local, regional and national environment in the framework of self-management processes which meet their own aspirations, using an approach based on intercultural understanding.

263. The project targets the country's entire indigenous population of approximately 600,000 people and includes the following three components:

Self-sufficiency and food security;

Endogenous socialization;

Recognition of the communities' own forms of internal social control.

It is being implemented through social units, i.e. population groups with a common history and territory which share a system of social, cultural, political, economic and ideological relations and have a common life project. The following activities are being carried out:

> Research activities: an organized, rational and systematized process by which knowledge is obtained about the particular features of each indigenous people;
>
> Support for and strengthening of the communities' internal management; ongoing activities for the management and development of ethnic projects favourable to development, self-recognition and cultural self-validation;
>
> Implementation: support by ICBF and other agencies for the preparation and implementation of ethnic projects decided on by the communities and reflecting a planning process;
>
> Evaluation: activities designed to provide communities with feedback on their management and cultural effectiveness and proposal of alternatives and decisions.

The project's achievements have been:

> Research on the sociocultural characteristics of certain ethnic peoples making it possible to gear activities to the usages, customs, traditions and forms of social and political organization of the indigenous peoples living in the departments of Meta, Nariño, Cesar, Santander, Cauca and Amazonas;
>
> Assessment study, "Indians of the plain, forest and mountains";
>
> Nation-wide dissemination of support materials for work with indigenous peoples: "Building Intercultural Understanding";
>
> Advisory assistance for the protection of indigenous children;
>
> Process of adapting projects to the needs of indigenous communities.

Year	1995	1996	1997
Coverage	121 298	134 542	142 720
Budget (millions of pesos)	548.0	1 271.0	1 827.0

Article 21

Adoption of children

264. In accordance with the legal provisions contained in Decree No. 2737/89, the Juvenile Code, ICBF ensures that the administrative protection process for defining the legal status of children who are potential candidates for adoption by declaring them to have been abandoned takes place in a timely and appropriate manner.

265. The children are generally prepared, in accordance with their age, for integration into their new family environment in order to avoid painful failures for both the children and their adoptive families.

266. Prior to the start of the judicial process, ICBF, through its Adoption Division, sees to it that the adoptive parents provide all the documents listed in articles 105 and 106 of the Juvenile Code in order to facilitate proceedings before the family judge attached to the place where the child is living or the agency responsible for the child's personal care.

267. Following the adoption and pursuant to the provisions of article 106 (a) of the Juvenile Code, ICBF monitors, discreetly and on a temporary basis, the child's development in his new family through the international adoption agency authorized in each country to process international adoptions.

268. Through other protection programmes, ICBF controls and prevents abandonment, ill-treatment and abuse of children and seeks to ensure that those who are in need of adoption promptly find the best family environment for their full development.

269. ICBF systematizes all data on children and families in order to maintain up-to-date and available information on adoption to back up proposals for action or prevention. In so doing, it has identified the characteristics which make a child a difficult candidate for adoption and devised alternative solutions.

Articles 23, 24 and 26

Conditions ensuring dignity, special care and assistance for physically or mentally disabled children, right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health, social security

270. In order to give effect to the health policy relating to children, a range of activities and programmes have been developed, some of the most important achievements of which are the following:

> Drop in the national infant mortality rate from 123.2 per 1,000 live births in 1950 to 30 in 1990 and 28 for the five-year period 1990-1995;
>
> Reduction of the mortality rate among children under 5 from 132 deaths per 1,000 children under 5 in 1960 to 36 per 1,000 in 1995;
>
> The national average for exclusive breastfeeding through the age of six months was 11 per cent for 1995. According to a study conducted by ICBF, exclusive breastfeeding through the age of six months for the children of community mothers was 39 per cent in 1997;

The average duration of breastfeeding in Colombia rose from 5.9 months in 1991 to 11 months in 1995;

Drop in prevalence of overall malnutrition in children under five years of age from 21 per cent in 1965 to 8 per cent in 1995 and decrease in chronic malnutrition from 32 per cent to 15 per cent during the same period;

Elimination of neonatal tetanus as a public health problem, with an 87 per cent reduction in cases between 1989 and 1996. The current incidence rate is less than under 0.1 per 1,000 live births;

Increase in social security coverage from 20 per cent in 1994 to 53 per cent in 1998 under the General Health Insurance Scheme, which services family units and gives priority to pregnant women, female heads of families and children under one year of age;

Reduction of 29 per cent in perinatal mortality, 50 per cent in low birth weight and more than 50 per cent in the incidence of premature births and increase in average birth weight - in one-quarter of the territorial entities - through the introduction of a preventive action model.

271. An expanded immunization programme is also being conducted to eradicate various diseases such as poliomyelitis, measles and neonatal tetanus and to control hepatitis B, rubella, bacterial meningitis and morbidity and mortality due to diphtheria and yellow fever. The tables below describe the programme's objectives and the results achieved.

Plan for the eradication of poliomyelitis

Objective	Result
Consolidate the eradication of polio in Colombia	Colombia was certified free from poliomyelitis in 1994 and, from that date onwards, the indicators supporting certification have remained above 80 per cent (minimum required). There have been no confirmed cases of polio since 1991, i.e. not a single case for the last seven years.
	In addition, an annual large-scale immunization programme has been planned and conducted for every child under five years of age, with an additional dose of oral polio vaccine.
	Cases of acute flaccid paralysis, at all levels, are strictly monitored. Cases are analysed weekly at the central level.

Plan for the elimination and eradication of measles by the year 2000

Objective	Result
Curb virus transmission, decrease morbidity and mortality and maintain coverage levels of over 95 per cent	Introduction of the triple viral vaccine for children under 5 years of age and booster dose at 10 years. In 1995, approximately 2,700,000 children under three years old were vaccinated with this new vaccine.
	Viral transmission was curbed and a decrease of 90 per cent in annual reported cases was achieved.
	The 1997 attack rates were the lowest reported in Colombia in this century; only nine cases were confirmed by laboratory tests.
	From 1996 to 1998, no deaths from measles were reported.
	Reports of suspected cases are evaluated on a weekly basis.
	The laboratory network was strengthened throughout the country.

Neonatal tetanus elimination plan

Objective	Result
Elimination of neonatal tetanus. Achieve rates of less than 1 per 1,000 live births.	Municipalities classified as being in the maintenance phase have succeeded in protecting more than 90 per cent of WCBA and the risk of cases arising is less than one per 1,000 live births.
	At the moment, 482 municipalities are classified as risk areas, 136 of which have been reported as silent areas. In the 1997 evaluation, the proportion of municipalities in the attack phase decreased to 38 per cent.
	As of 1997, Colombia had achieved an accumulated tetanus toxoid immunization coverage rate of 77 per cent and reduced the frequency of cases of neonatal tetanus by 90 per cent in comparison with 1985.
	The PAHO recommendation was adopted and tetanus toxoid was replaced by tetanus-diphtheria toxoid.

Hepatitis B control plan

Objective	Result
Begin control of hepatitis B and hepatitis delta in Colombia	Introduction of hepatitis B vaccine, for children under 5 throughout the country and for children under 10 in endemic areas.
	Examination and vaccination of health workers.
	Studies showing vaccination to be over 70 per cent effective in decreasing infection and 100 per cent effective in reducing carrier states.

Control plan for rubella and congenital rubella syndrome

Objective	Result
Begin control of rubella and congenital rubella	In 1995, the triple viral vaccine (measles, rubella and mumps) was introduced in Colombia. The vaccine was administered to 90 per cent of children from 1 to 3 years of age, i.e. 2,700,000 children.
	In addition, a mass immunization campaign was held for the 10 to 15-year age group, 90 per cent of whom (approximately 3,700,000 children) have now been vaccinated.
	Vaccines are being administered to women after childbirth or abortion and women of childbearing age, who are considered to be a group at risk already included in the vaccination scheme.
	A rubella and congenital rubella syndrome monitoring system is being implemented.

Control plan for bacterial meningitis

Objective	Result
Begin control of meningococcal meningitis and Haemophilus influenzae	Introduction of meningococcal meningitis vaccines for endemic areas and for the 5 to14-year age group and introduction of Haemophilus vaccine for children under 1 throughout the country.
	In under two months, 700,000 children under 1 were vaccinated against meningitis and pneumonia due to Haemophilus.
	A system of epidemiological monitoring of diseases produced by these bacteria is being implemented.

Other control plans

Objective	Result
Decrease morbidity and mortality due to diphtheria	During 1997 and 1998, only eight suspected cases of diphtheria were reported, of which two were confirmed in 1997, while, in 1998, three of the five cases were ruled out. Tetanus-diphtheria toxoid has replaced tetanus toxoid for use with women of child-bearing age, covering two pathologies.
Decrease morbidity and mortality due to pertussis	Cases of pertussis have tended to decline, by more than 70 per cent of expected cases.
Decrease morbidity and mortality due to yellow fever	Areas where yellow fever is endemic have been defined and 40 per cent of the population at risk has been vaccinated.

272. The Ministry of Health also implements institutional support plans for agencies carrying out projects relating to children's health and educational support plans relating to preventive aspects and awareness-raising in the areas of responsible sexuality and the use of psychoactive substances. The following are worth mentioning:

Inclusion of the promotion and protection of children's and adolescents' health as an item on the national, departmental and municipal political agenda, with the participation of social sectors and civil society;

Breastfeeding and childcare programmes:

> Development of information, education and communication strategies through the press, radio and television, on healthy mothers and children, protection of the mother-child nucleus, encouragement of breastfeeding and prevention of maternal and child mortality;
>
> Reformulation of the plan for the promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding and training of Ministry of Health staff and teachers from university health sciences and social sciences departments in the General Health Insurance Scheme's promotion and prevention policies, breastfeeding courses and information on the strategy adopted by the Woman- and Child-Friendly Institutions (IAMIs);
>
> Training and technical assistance for 20 regions in the promotion of breastfeeding and accreditation of 55 institutions as Woman- and Child-Friendly Institutions. As of July 1998, the IAMI initiative was being used in over 300 institutions nation-wide;
>
> Involvement of the Social Security Institute and the Office of the District Health Secretary in Bogotá in the implementation of the IAMI strategy; both institutions are following this initiative in 100 per cent of their agencies;

Training programmes in:

> Responsible sexuality and prevention of pharmacological dependence;
>
> Preparation and dissemination of the sexual and reproductive health policy, granting priority to adolescents as a group and emphasizing activities promoting factors conducive to healthy, complete, autonomous, safe and responsible sexuality and the prevention of unplanned pregnancies and abortions among young people; educational and preventive activities on exposure to tobacco, alcohol and drug addiction;

Training in children's rights:

> (i) Promotion of proper treatment of children, an integral part of the national mental health policy; the policy guidelines of this campaign include this

aspect as a priority mental health area and define strategies conducive to promoting the mental health and well-being of children and the detection and timely treatment of the different mental pathologies and disturbances;

(ii) A preliminary document called "A strategy for Healthy Schools" was prepared, aimed at schoolchildren's human and social development;

(iii) Awareness-raising and motivation to strengthen protection and prevention and to control risk factors leading to violence, ill-treatment and abuse against children and adolescents.

Child abuse

Since 1996, resources from the munitions and explosives tax have been earmarked for the prevention of domestic violence and the treatment of child abuse;

Establishment of community and institutional networks to provide for a timely response and public health monitoring as part of the national system to combat child abuse and sexual abuse, a project coordinated by the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Social Policy.

Vaccination coverage levels and goals sought from 1994 through 1998 [21]

Vaccine	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998	
	goal	met %	goal	met %	goal	met %	goal	met %	goal	met %
Polio	90	92	90	95	95	95	95	85	95	70
DPT	90	88	90	94	95	95	95	84	95	70
Measles	90	84	95	80	-	-	-	-	-	-
Triple viral	-	-	95	97	95	98	95	89	95	80
BCG	90	96	90	99	95	99	95	99	95	70
Hepatitis B	-	-	90	74	95	95	95	85	95	72

Action in the framework of the HIV/AIDS programme to decrease the vertical transmission of HIV

273. Decree No. 1543 states that, because the number of cases of HIV/AIDS in this population group is on the rise, the programme's prevention policies give this group priority in its strategies for the next year, the objective of which is to reduce the vertical transmission rate to a minimum level. They are based on the treatment schemes contained in protocol No. 076 of 1994, which has shown optimal results in decreasing vertical transmission throughout the world, including third world countries, with rates varying between 2 and 5 per cent, i.e. an 80 to 90 per cent decrease in transmission.

274. The second edition of the manual Perinatal and paediatric AIDS was published in 1996; the manual was originally edited and published in 1994 for first-hand use by the basic health team at primary health care levels and in specialized centres. This document is the result of joint work by health professionals with experience in the clinical care of pregnant women and children living with HIV infection, with the coordination of the National Programme for STD-HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control.

275. The papers Basic Handling of HIV-AIDS Infection (February 1997) and Perinatal and Paediatric AIDS (January 1996) contain technical information on strategies for the prevention and control of the HIV-AIDS epidemic and of vertical transmission from mother to child.

276. These plans contain specific activities aimed at a substantial short-term reduction in cases of HIV among children; these include the Comprehensive Care Guides and the preparation and implementation of a National Plan for the Prevention of Vertical Transmission.

Plan for the elimination of congenital syphilis

277. The plan for the elimination of congenital syphilis in Colombia, which was introduced in 1995, is aimed at eliminating syphilis by the end of the year 2000 (reducing the incidence rate of congenital syphilis to 1 case per 2,000 live births over a five-year period); to achieve this goal, gradual measures were introduced as follows:

> Guarantee the early detection and appropriate and timely treatment of pregnant women with the disease;
>
> Guarantee the treatment and follow-up of children fitting the definition of congenital syphilis;
>
> Guarantee the treatment of sexual partners of infected mothers;
>
> Strengthen epidemiological surveillance of congenital syphilis in order to monitor the activities' impact.

278. To implement the foregoing, a manual of technical-administrative and technical-scientific norms was prepared and distributed and has been adapted according to developments in the General Health Insurance Scheme.

279. As of 1996, total investment in reagents was Col$ 214,962,550 and, in medicines, Col$ 170,535,221, distributed in 36 departments and four district capitals, according to the concentration of cases.

280. Efforts to implement the health policy relating to children and meet the objectives of the World Summit for Children produced the results indicated below in 1995. The expected rate for 2000 is also given for each objective:

Progress achieved in meeting the goals of the World Summit for Children[22]

Goal year 2000	Rates observed in 1990	Expected rate year 2000 according to 1995 goal	Result obtained 1995
Reduction of mortality due to diarrhoeal diseases by 50 per cent by the year 2000 in comparison with 1990	47.2 per 100,000 children under 5	35.4 per 100,000	31.7 per 100,000 Goal achieved 112 per cent latest data according to DANE
Reduction of mortality due to diarrhoeal diseases by 25 per cent by the year 2000 in comparison with 1990	113.5 per 100,000 children under 5	Expected rate according to 1997 goal 93.63 per 1,000	Result obtained 1997 87.8 per 1,000 Goal achieved 107 per cent
Reduction of mortality due to acute respiratory infection by 30 per cent by the year 2000 in comparison with 1990	48.3 per 100,000 children under 5	Expected rate according to 1995 goal 41.1 per 100,000	40.0 per 100,000 Goal achieved 103 per cent latest data according to DANE

Social security

281. Regarding the protection of children, article 44 of the Constitution of Colombia stipulates that the right to social security is one of the basic rights of children.

282. Article 50 of the Constitution guarantees free medical care to children under a year old in all health institutions that receive State subsidies, if such treatment is not covered by any type of protection or social security.

283. Article 376, paragraph 3, of the Constitution relating to the transfer of taxes from the Central Government to the provinces for health and education services states that these resources will be allocated to health, with special attention to children at the pre-school, primary and secondary levels.

284. It should be noted that a priority goal of the National Development and Investment Plan 1995-1998, contained in Act No. 188 of 1998, is the gradual affiliation of the people to social security through a system of subsidies for the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of the population.

285. Through the introduction of the Annual Mother and Child Plan (PAMI), the State is thus trying to implement a strategy of accelerated incorporation of vulnerable groups into the subsidized system, especially pregnant women and children under one year of age, selected on the basis of previously determined criteria.

286. Pursuant to the Constitution, article 163 of the Social Security Act (Act No. 100 of 1993) relating to family coverage stipulates that family coverage will be part of the mandatory health plan, whose beneficiaries will also include children under 18 of either of the spouses who are

part of the family unit and economically dependent on it; the plan also covers children over 18 with permanent disabilities and children under 25 provided that they are full-time students and economically dependent on the plan member.

287. The remaining aspects relating to social security for minors are also contained in Act No. 100 of 1993.

288. Between 1994 and 1998, there was an increase in social security coverage, which rose from 20 per cent in 1994 to 53 per cent in 1998 under the General Health Insurance Scheme, as mentioned above, the beneficiary being the family nucleus, with priority to pregnant women, women heads of household and children under one year of age.

289. With regard to the right of disabled children to receive special care and have access to training, preparation for employment and rehabilitation, the following activities are being carried out:

> Inter-agency work has been done through the National Committee for the Protection of Mentally Retarded Children. In conducting the bidding process for the contracting of agencies, ICBF received support from the Ministries of Health and Education, INCI and INSOR. ICBF is expected to participate next year in the strengthening of the inter-agency support networks for the training and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, sponsored by the Ministry of Health, in order to coordinate efforts;
>
> Progress has been made in designing technical guidelines for the treatment of children with disabilities;
>
> During this year, support was provided for training events sponsored by NGOs;
>
> The training of contract supervisors in evaluation and comprehensive diagnosis and the follow-up and evaluation of action plans is scheduled for next year;
>
> Efforts focus on enhancing the follow-up of services for children with disabilities, in particular institutional services for the most vulnerable children with multiple disabilities;
>
> The national educational system provides for the specific problems of educating children with physical, sensory and psychological limitations;
>
> Decree No. 2082 of 1996 contains the principles and guidelines for special education in Colombia;
>
> The activities of the Ministry of Education include technical and financial support for 36 departments of education, awareness-raising workshops for the educational community, training for 1,800 teacher's aides and interdisciplinary teams, training for teachers in 220 schools, the provision of specialized teaching materials and equipment for another 220 schools, research aimed at enhancing the delivery of education, support for low-income families through education subsidies and a target study of population groups in 70 municipalities providing organized data for policy formulation.

Article 32

Protection from economic exploitation and work likely to be hazardous or to interfere with education or to be harmful

290. Colombia is committed to the gradual elimination of child labour and the protection of young workers. Various sectors of society have agreed upon joint objectives and goals and specific programmes are currently being developed to prevent early entry into the labour force and to rescue and protect working children aged under 14 and young people aged between 14 and 18 engaged in harmful and dangerous activities.

291. In this campaign, Colombia is cooperating with various United Nations agencies, particularly the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The latter, through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), has been providing technical and financial assistance for the development of national policy on the issue since May 1996.

292. The various initiatives that different sectors of society have been putting forward for some time are now being thoroughly consolidated and mechanisms are now being established to ensure that they will be sustainable in the future.

Achievements in the campaign to eliminate child labour in Colombia

293. First, we will present the statistical analysis of the situation contained in the document "Child and youth labour: main trends between 1992 and 1996 - preliminary report", sponsored by IPEC, ILO, the Inter-Agency Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers and the University of the Andes.

294. Secondly, we will give a brief account of government policies on the subject and of the processes of institution-building, social action programmes, recent legislative developments and some cases of direct action.

Child and youth labour: main trends between 1992 and 1996

Labour-force participation of young people aged between 14 and 17

295. In 1996, one out of every four young people aged between 14 and 17 was economically active, i.e. exercising or seeking to exercise a paid occupation (or unpaid in the case of domestic help) in the production of goods and services for the market. Nevertheless, as compared with the situation in 1992, Colombia is witnessing a downward trend in the employment of young workers. The specific labour-force participation rate of young people aged between 14 and 17 fell by 17 per cent, from 31.2 per cent to 25.9 per cent.

296. Labour-force participation rates in 1996 are much higher in rural areas than in urban areas - one out of every three young people in rural areas, compared with one out of five in urban areas. Nevertheless, the rates have fallen in both urban and rural areas. The participation rate

for young people aged between 14 and 17 fell from 21.3 per cent to 18.4 per cent in urban areas and from 43.1 per cent to 36.9 per cent in rural areas, a decrease of 13.6 per cent and 14.4 per cent, respectively, between 1992 and 1996.

297. Traditional gender-based work patterns indicate that, in both urban and rural areas, males have a higher level of participation in the labour market than females. In 1996, for example, 23.5 per cent of adolescent urban males aged between 14 and 17 were working, as compared with only 13.8 per cent of urban females of the same age. In other words, urban males' participation in the labour force is almost double that of urban females. In rural areas, the differences are even greater: 55.2 per cent of males as opposed to 16.7 per cent of females of the same age were economically active.

298. Nevertheless, gender-based differences in labour-force participation are significantly lower when household activities are included.

299. Traditionally, girls do more in the way of cleaning the house, taking care of brothers and sisters, preparing food and, generally, any other household chores, and the data clearly bear this out. The adjusted participation rates show that, in 1996, 30.4 per cent of girls aged between 14 and 17 were economically active, as compared with 38 per cent of boys. In urban areas, the difference between male and female labour-force participation is also less great: the participation rate for females is 21.8 per cent and for males 24.4 per cent. In rural areas, the gap is further reduced: 44.2 per cent of females and 56.2 per cent of males participate in the labour market.

300. It is not only gender differences that are affected if the definition of child and youth labour is changed. Clearly, the adjusted labour-force participation rates are higher than the traditional labour-force participation rates because domestic tasks are included as "work". Which is the most appropriate definition? The answer to this complex question depends on the assessment and judgement of the person using the figures.

Labour-force participation of children aged between 12 and 13

301. The younger the children, the less likely they are to be working. The traditional labour-force participation rate for children aged between 12 and 13 was 9.9 per cent in 1996, although it was considerably higher in rural areas (17 per cent) than in urban areas (3.9 per cent) and was higher for males (14.6 per cent) than for females (4.7 per cent).

302. As in the 14 to 17-year-old age group, the traditional labour-force participation of children aged between 12 and 13 fell between 1992 and 1996, particularly in urban areas. The traditional labour-force participation rate for children aged between 12 and 13 fell from 12.8 per cent in 1992 to 9.9 per cent in 1996, a decrease of 22.7 per cent over this period. In urban areas, the participation rate fell from 5.7 per cent to 3.9 per cent and, in rural areas, from 20.7 per cent to 17 per cent, decreases of 31 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively.

303. If household tasks are considered as work, the participation of children aged between 12 and 13 rises; it reached 25 per cent in rural areas in 1996. However, even using this broader definition of work, the participation of children aged between 12 and 13 in the labour force fell after 1992, when it was as high as 31 per cent in rural areas.

Labour-force participation of children aged between 7 and 11

304. For the purposes of the national household survey of the National Administrative Department for Statistics (DANE), information was collected on the economic activity of the population aged 12 and over, but no information was collected on the working conditions of children aged under 12. In order to go more deeply into the question of child labour by minors under 12 years old, DANE carried out a survey on childhood and adolescence (ENA-1) in October 1996 in eight Colombian cities and metropolitan areas, as a special module of EH-93 6. The ENA-1 Survey makes it possible to identify children who work for a business or manufacturer at home or outside or who consider themselves "independent" and also to identify children working in the home. In both cases, the number of hours devoted to each activity was ascertained. On the basis of this information, two complementary definitions of child labour were given. The first definition includes all children performing any kind of work for a business or manufacturer or independently, with no restrictions on the number of hours worked per week. The second definition considers any child who spends more than 20 hours a week working on household tasks as a child labourer.

305. The specific employment rate of children aged between 7 and 11 in 1996 was 1.8 per cent, that is, 1 out of 55 children aged between 7 and 11 was working. According to the second definition of work, the percentage was estimated at 2.8 per cent, that is, 1 out of 36 children was working.

306. It is not possible to make comparisons over time, but, by way of illustration, it may be recalled that the actual labour-force participation rate (according to the traditional definition) for children aged between 6 and 9 in the 10 biggest Colombian cities was 1.8 per cent and that for the 10 to 11-year-old age group was 3.6 per cent in June 1992.

Education and work

307. In Colombia, as in the majority of Latin American countries, the school attendance rate decreases with age. In 1996, 87 per cent of children aged between 12 and 13 and only 70 per cent of young people aged between 14 and 17 attended a formal educational establishment (at the pre-school, primary, secondary or university level).

308. Given the reduced educational opportunities and the higher drop-out rate in rural areas, enrolment rates for children in rural areas are lower than in urban areas: 70.7 per cent in rural areas as opposed to 92.4 per cent in urban areas for children aged between 12 and 13, and 55.5 per cent in rural areas as opposed to 79.9 per cent in urban areas for the 14 to 17-year-old age group.

309. Despite these relatively low rates, especially in rural areas, school attendance is higher than it was in 1992. Enrolment rates for 14 to 17-year-olds climbed from 63.7 per cent

to 70 per cent between 1992 and 1996, an increase of 9.9 per cent, and that of the 12 to 13-year-olds from 82.2 per cent to 87 per cent, a slight increase of 5.8 per cent. This increase in school attendance is consistent with the decreases observed in the labour-force participation rates for children and young people.

310. Differences in school attendance by boys and girls show that girls participate more in the educational system than their male contemporaries, especially in rural areas. Thus, whereas 59 per cent of girls aged between 14 and 17 in rural areas attended school, only 52 per cent of boys aged between 14 and 17 in rural areas did so. This partly explains the higher participation of male youths in rural areas in the above-mentioned labour market.

311. In Colombia's case, school activities and work appear to be mutually exclusive rather than complementary. The figures for a combination of activities (studies, work and household tasks) indicate that the majority of young people engage only in study activities, while very few combine activities. This situation was far more apparent in 1996 than in 1992 and applies to all groups, regardless of age, gender or area: the proportion of young people who devote their time entirely to their studies is increasing, while the proportion devoting their time entirely to working is decreasing. This behaviour is evidence of a low complementarity between study and work and is consistent with the evidence showing an increase in school-enrolment rates and a decrease in labour-force participation rates between 1992 and 1996 for children and young people.

Employment characteristics

Occupation

312. A breakdown of the jobs performed by working children and young people in 1996 shows a predominance of farming activities for males (60 per cent) and service activities for females (50 per cent). This picture did not change significantly between 1992 and 1996, although a slight increase could be observed in the number of boys aged 12 to 13 working as traders or sellers.

313. The breakdown by occupation varies by area. Farm workers predominate among rural males, whereas manual workers are in the majority among urban males. This was the case in both 1992 and 1996. Urban females mostly work in services, whereas, in rural areas, girls work not only in services, but also as farm workers. The proportion of females aged between 14 and 17 in rural areas working in service jobs increased between 1992 and 1996, at the expense of farm work. This situation differs from that observed for 12 to 13-year-old girls working in rural areas. It appears that, in 1996, girls were more likely to start working in farming activities and then move on to activities in the service sector.

Working day

314. Under Colombian law, children aged between 12 and 13 may work only up to four hours a day (24 hours a week). Nevertheless, it was observed that, in 1996, boys of this age were working on average 32 hours a week and girls 36 hours a week. In accordance with the law on child labour, the length of the working day increases with age. Thus, young males aged

between 14 and 15 worked on average 40.2 hours a week in 1996 and females worked 39.8 hours a week. In the 16 to 17-year-old age group, males worked 43.9 hours a week and females 44.5 hours a week.

315. In almost all age groups, females generally worked longer than males.

316. Nevertheless, the long working days of both boys and girls appear to have become shorter in recent years, as the trend between 1992 and 1996 shows some changes for the better, particularly in the 12 to 13-year-old age group: down from 38 hours a week for boys in this age group in 1992 to 32 hours a week in 1996 and down from 39 to 36 hours a week for girls in the same age group. Even in the case of older working children, a shortening of the working day can be observed. For example, the number of hours a week worked by 14 to 15-year-old girls fell from 44.6 to 39.8.

317. The length of the working day differs by area and sex. On the one hand, males in rural areas work longer hours than those in cities. Thus, in 1996, whereas a 12 to 13-year-old boy in a rural area worked on average 33.8 hours a week, a boy of the same age in an urban area worked 26 hours a week (fig. 24). In the case of girls, those in urban areas worked longer days: a 12 to 13-year-old girl in an urban area worked on average 42 hours a week, whereas her counterpart in the country worked 34 hours a week.

318. On the other hand, in urban areas, girls work longer days than boys: a 12 to 13-year-old girl in an urban area works on average 42 hours a week (fig. 25) and a boy of the same age in the same area works on average 26 hours. These gender-based differences between areas are closely linked to the type of job done by each sex in each area. It will be recalled that males in rural areas work mainly in agricultural jobs and females in urban areas are basically performing jobs in the service sector, predominantly in domestic service. Clearly, these two types of job have no fixed hours and therefore young people end up working long days.

319. The length of the working day for children should be within the limits laid down by law for that purpose. However, in 1996, a significant proportion of young people were working days longer than those provided for by law. In 1996, 59.4 per cent of boys aged between 12 and 13 and 67 per cent of girls aged between 12 and 13 worked an average number of hours that was higher than the legal limit. The proportion of children working longer days than those allowed by law decreases with age, partly because the law increases the permitted length of the working day with age.

320. Despite the unsatisfactory situation observed in 1996 with respect to the proportion of young people working days longer than the legal limit, the situation was even worse in 1992. The proportion of 12 to 13-year-old boys working days longer than the legal limit fell from 70.1 per cent in 1992 to 59.4 per cent in 1996, while the same proportion for the 16 to 17-year-old age group fell from 46 per cent to 35 per cent in the same period. In the case of girls, only in the 12 to 13-year-old age group was a slight increase observed in the proportion of girls working days longer than the legal limit, going from 64.5 per cent in 1992 to 66.9 per cent in 1996. In the other age groups, one finds, as in the case of boys, a decrease in the proportion working days longer than those provided for by law (figs. 28 and 29).

Access to social security

321. The law in Colombia provides that:

> "In no circumstances may the social security and other guarantees granted to workers over the age of 18 be reduced in the case of younger workers. Every employer making use of children below the age of 18 is under an obligation to register them with the Social Security Institute or the relevant welfare body as from the date on which the employment contract or working relationship is established."

322. Nevertheless, only 4.3 per cent of male workers between the age of 14 and 17 are registered with a social security and health scheme and 2.1 per cent with a pension fund. The proportion of girls of the same age registered for health purposes is 7 per cent and, for pensions, 3.3 per cent. Social security and pension coverage for working children in Colombia is thus almost non-existent.

New government policies to eliminate child labour

323. Significant progress has been made during the current decade on policy-making, institution-building, the development of analytical tools, mobilizing society with regard to the issue, taking direct action in critical situations, improving legislation and subscribing to and actively supporting the worldwide movement to eliminate child labour.

324. In December 1995, the Inter-Agency Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers, with the support of ILO, completed its work on the National Plan of Action for the Gradual Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers, which coordinates the work of agencies in pursuit of this objective.

325. The plan was the result of a detailed analysis of the trends, extent and characteristics of child labour in Colombia and of the institutional resources available at the time for preventing early entry into the labour market, rescuing children from it and improving working conditions for children.

326. The plan's main objectives are related to:

> Strengthening the educational system in such a way as to keep children in school at least until they have completed their basic education and also to develop work training programmes for young people over the age of 14;
>
> Ensuring that all children enjoy the right to health within their household and ensuring that workers over the age of 14 have access to a comprehensive social security scheme (covering health, pensions and occupational hazards);
>
> Supporting the poorest families in their economically productive activities and in caring for their children;

Seeking out children working in harmful and dangerous jobs and providing them with comprehensive protection;

Strengthening domestic legislation and the mechanisms to ensure its implementation;

Constantly bearing in mind the issue of child labour at the national and local levels;

Establishing and strengthening the bodies responsible for developing the policy to eliminate child labour.

327. In May 1996, the ILO and the Government of Colombia agreed on how to implement the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) at the national level. IPEC's overall objective is to support the various sectors of society in developing the agreed national policy on the issue. Its specific objectives are: to encourage constant analysis of the situation, to strengthen sectoral and cross-sectoral bodies and policies dealing with the elimination of child labour; to come up with models for action that include ways to prevent early entry into the labour market, to remove children from the labour force, protect them and improve children's working conditions; and to mobilize the various sectors of society so that they become aware of the problem and commit themselves to the elimination of child labour and to supporting the worldwide movement to eliminate child labour.

Institution-building

328. Inter-Agency Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers. Presidential Decree No. 859 was issued in May 1995 and established the committee responsible for formulating and developing policies and programmes to prevent and eliminate the participation of children in the workforce and to regulate and improve children's working conditions.

329. Since then, the Committee has designed and evaluated the operational plans for each year. One of the strategies agreed upon to keep the national committee active was the establishment of an executive committee consisting of specialists representing agencies with expertise in the appropriate field to deal with policies for the elimination of child labour.

330. In addition to preparing the operational plans for submission to the Inter-Agency Committee for its consideration, the executive committee establishes machinery to follow up the commitments made by agencies and strategies to promote their active involvement.

331. Decentralization of the National Plan. Through the strategy of the Children's Covenant, analytical work and the formulation of action plans for children were promoted for the specific purpose of eliminating child labour in the country's 32 departments and a national network was set up, consisting of over 6,000 people working continuously to guarantee the implementation of children's rights.

332. In order to facilitate the organization of action to eliminate child labour, a methodological approach was drawn up for departmental and municipal authorities. It includes procedures for speeding up the local assessment process, drafting and executing a local plan with strategies for prevention and action and ensuring that the plan is followed up.

333. The status of regional action is shown in the following table.

Key

1. Workshop to raise public officials' awareness of child labour.

2. Establishment of the Departmental Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers.

3. Establishment and implementation of municipal plans and a departmental plan for the gradual elimination of child labour and the protection of young workers, to be included as one of the priorities of the relevant local development plan. At the very least, these plans should propose actions corresponding to each of the action lines laid down in the National Plan.

4. Holding of events to mobilize key sectors of society and provide them with training on the issue and on different ways to tackle it.

5. Training on the Active Search and Comprehensive Care Programme for the regional director of the Ministry of Labour, the regional director of the Colombian Family Welfare Institute and the departmental coordinator of the Children's Covenant.

6. Introduction of the Active Search and Comprehensive Care Programme.

7. Introduction of the Citizens' Watch Child Labour Programme.

8. Implementation of the Programme for the Gradual Elimination of Child Labour in districts or in areas or with specific groups.

Department	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Antioquia	X			X	X		X	X
Atlántico	X				X			
Boyacá	X	X			X			X
Bolívar	X	X			X			X
Caldas	X				X			X
Caquetá				X	X			
Cauca		X			X			
Cundinamarca					X			
Chocó				X	X	X		
Huila					X	X		
Magdalena					X			
Meta					X			
Nariño					X	X		
Norte de Santander	X				X			
Putumayo		X			X	X		
Quindío					X			
Risaralda	X	X			X			
Santander					X		X	
Tolima	X	X			X			
Valle del Cauca	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Guajira					X			
César					X			
Sucre					X			
Córdoba					X			
San Andrés					X			
Bogotá					X		X	
Amazonas	X			X	X			
Vaupés					X			
Guaviare					X			
Vichada					X			
Casanare					X			
Arauca					X			
Guainia					X			

334. Establishment of a public-private corporation for the elimination of child labour and the protection of young workers. Representatives from various sectors of society recently drew up a blueprint for a public-private corporation for the elimination of child labour, a mixed composition body with private status working full time on the specialized task of implementing the national policy on the elimination of child labour. Once its objectives, tasks and organizational and operational form had been decided upon, the appropriate bill was prepared for submission to Congress.

335. Strengthening the educational sector. In addition to developing a policy to broaden the coverage and improve the quality of education, which contributes directly to the elimination of

child labour, the Ministry of Education provides technical assistance to seven departments on the role of schools in preventing the exploitation of children at work and in providing comprehensive care for young people.

336. Trade union plan of action for the elimination of child labour. As a result of the agreement between the three general trade unions in Colombia - the Amalgamated Workers' Union, the General Confederation of Workers and the Workers' Confederation of Colombia - and the action that some of them have been taking for some time, a joint plan of action was drawn up in 1997 for the elimination of child labour and the protection of young workers.

337. Codes of conduct. In 1996, the National Manufacturers' Association (ANDI) adopted a resolution establishing codes of conduct for its members with the aim of preventing and eliminating participation by children and young people in the labour force.

338. Meanwhile, the Colombian Association of Flower-Growers included guidelines in the codes of conduct of the Florverde project[23] to prohibit the hiring of minors under the age of 14 and to regulate the hiring of young people aged between 15 and 17.

Some cases of direct action

339. The objective of this line of action is to stimulate the design, management, implementation and assessment of programmes and projects to prevent child labour and to rescue and protect working children. For this purpose, the following activities, among others, have been undertaken.

340. Elimination of child labour in coal mining. In 1995, the Colombian Coal Company (Ecocarbon) initiated a programme of action to eliminate child labour from coal mining. This programme, which was carried out in the departments of Antioquia, Boyacá and Cundinamarca, comprises the following elements:

> Tracing and identification of the children (in 1996, the year in which the survey of children working in mines was completed, it was established that 1,124 children were engaged in activities related to coal extraction in the three departments);[24]
>
> The construction and equipping of care centres for former mining children (training, recreation, production);
>
> Development of social programmes relating, inter alia, to assistance for families, business training, recreation and sports, nutrition, psychological assistance and speech therapy;
>
> Design and development of joint productive projects; creation of alternative forms of production for young people and their families, skills training, the allocation of loans and project follow-up.

341. So far, Ecocarbon has managed to get over 70 per cent of the children working in coal-mining activities to stop this work altogether. It is estimated that, in a year-and-a-half the target of 100 per cent will be reached.

342. Plans for direct action put forward by non-governmental organizations. Numerous national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are currently putting forward specific programmes for working children and young people. In general, the activities carried out by each of these organizations relate to support at school, workshops on personal development, recreational activities and sports, basic health care, skills training, business training, savings and loans, production units for partners, including family members, psychological assessment and employment assistance workshops.

343. A significant percentage of these organizations have been hired by the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF), which provides child protection services by paying for places in NGOs.

344. The following are some of the plans for specific action that have been carried out by various NGOs in the last two years:

> Establishment and implementation of the Active Search and Comprehensive Care Programme for Working Children. To get this project off the ground, a team was set up consisting of representatives of ICBF, the Ministries of Education and Labour, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Social Policy, UNICEF and the IPEC programme of ILO, which was responsible for establishing the procedures for the development of the programme. One of the priorities was to consult with the various national NGOs developing programmes for child workers in order to find out what search and action strategies they used. For this purpose, a national workshop was convened on active searching, which was attended by 13 NGOs and the various national agencies. Several meetings were held with the executive body and with the national agencies promoting the project in order to review project development and suggest relevant adjustments. Once the design phase was completed, a workshop was held with regional representatives of ICBF, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Children's Covenant to give them instructions on managing the Active Search and Comprehensive Care Programme and machinery was devised to set it up in each region.
>
> Searching for working minors. Executing agency: Colombian Confederation of Non-Governmental Organizations. Beneficiaries: 120 working children from the city of Bogotá and the rural area of the departments of Cundinamarca and Boyacá. Seventeen national organizations that are members of the Inter-Agency Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers and 13 NGOs took part.
>
> Design of a productive educational model based on environmental education as a way to discourage child labour in the municipality of Cerrito, department of Santander. Executing agency: Agua Viva National Centre for Health, the Environment and Work (CENSAT). Beneficiaries: 30 families of working children and young people under the age of 18 working in hazardous conditions on farms or in mines and all of the educational institutions in the municipality of Cerrito.
>
> Design of a personal development module for girl prostitutes. Executing agency: Antonio Restrepo Barco Foundation (FRB). Beneficiaries: 220 girls, boys and

adolescents who have been sexually exploited and who are in the care of protection agencies. Members of protection agencies and of agencies linked to local support networks for the prevention of prostitution (ICBF, national police, Social Solidarity Network, local health services and NGOs).

Municipal approaches to tackling the problem of child labour in 14 municipalities in the departments of Boyacá, Cundinamarca and Tolima. Executing agency: Colombian Pedagogical Society (SOCOLPE). Beneficiaries: children and young people who might or who already work and their families, local authorities and public and private agencies with direct responsibility for preventing child labour and providing comprehensive care to working children and young people, municipal councils for rural development and other community bodies.

Education project to raise people's awareness of the issue of working minors. Executing agency: Occupational Health Unit of the Ministry of Health. Beneficiaries: 20 per cent of working children exposed to occupational hazards in the economic activities indicated below, 10 per cent of employers, 1,100 members of the community, 275 government officials and 30 per cent of the general public (through the awareness-raising activities).

Urban sector:

Construction industry: Santafé de Bogotá, Medellín, Santa Marta, Pereira and Bucaramanga;

Informal economy: Santafé de Bogotá, Barranquilla and Cúcuta.

Rural sector:

Mining: Cundinamarca, Antioquia and Valle;

Agriculture: Tolima.

345. Establishment of a "bank" for projects to eliminate child labour. In order to facilitate the functioning of the Executive Committee, a call for the submission of projects was issued, the purpose of which is to serve as a common basis for identifying the programmes of action that will be included in the project bank. A checklist was also developed to assist members of the Executive Committee in analysing the projects submitted. In 1997, 23 projects were registered.

346. Steps have also been taken at the National Investment Programme and Project Bank and the Bank Network to strengthen the system for identifying, evaluating and financing projects. The critical path to be followed by public agencies at the departmental and municipal levels was established: this enables them to have access to a steady supply of State resources to fund projects for the prevention and elimination of child labour.

Legislative developments

347. Ratification of ILO Conventions. Colombia has already ratified ILO Conventions Nos. 5, 6, 7, 10, 15 and 16, concerning minimum age, working conditions and the compulsory medical examination for minors.

348. With the backing of other government agencies, employers' organizations, workers' organizations and IPEC/ILO, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are currently working on the ratification of the 1973 ILO Convention (No. 138) concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment. Bill No. 10 of 1997 was submitted to Congress together with an explanation of the reasoning behind it. On 3 December 1997, it was approved by a Senate committee and is now pending approval in plenary and transmission to the Committee of the House of Representatives.

349. The various national agencies consider that the spirit of ILO Convention No. 138 has in fact been broadly incorporated into domestic legislation, which prohibits minors under the age of 14 from working and regulates the working days, salaries and other labour rights of young people aged between 14 and 18.

350. In addition, the Government has clearly spelt out its intention to eliminate the participation of children in the labour force, particularly in harmful and dangerous work. Consequently, the conditions are in place for Convention No. 138 to be ratified, and this will in turn help to consolidate the progress made so far.

351. Presidential Decree No. 859 of May 1995, cited earlier, set up the Inter-Agency Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers, which is responsible for devising and developing policies and programmes to eliminate the participation of children in the labour force and for regulating and improving the working conditions of young people.

352. The 1996 resolution of the National Manufacturers' Association (ANDI), cited above, lays down guidelines for its members to prevent and eliminate the participation of children and young people in the labour force.

353. Strengthening the monitoring, inspection and penalties systems. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security has traditionally granted the relevant permits for 14 to 18-year-olds to work in safe and decent jobs. Regional inspectors from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security carry out periodic checks on the children, visit workplaces and inspect conditions of work.

354. In order to broaden the coverage of monitoring and inspections and to increase the effectiveness of action to protect children and penalize employers, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security also designed and set up citizens' watch programmes that offer a way to detect, report and follow up on cases of child labour.

Support for the international movement to eliminate child labour

355. Colombia hosted the First Tripartite Ibero-American Ministerial Meeting on the Elimination of Child Labour, which adopted the relevant Ibero-American policies contained in the Cartagena Declaration on the Elimination of Child Labour.

356. Colombia participated actively in the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Consultation on Child Labour (Brazil, July 1997) and in the Oslo Conference on Child Labour in October 1997 and adopted the recommendations made and agreements reached.

357. The Colombian part of the Global March against Child Labour is in the process of being organized; it has been taken as an opportunity to involve a larger number of social agents in the cause of eliminating child labour and to promote strategic action, as defined in the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour.

Main advances in action to eliminate child labour

358. Although the problem of child and young workers is a complex one in terms of measurement and implications, Colombia has tried various approaches to improve knowledge of the issue to be able to use it as a basis for policies and programmes to eliminate child labour and improve conditions for young workers.

359. Estimates based mainly on the National Household Survey of the National Administrative Department for Statistics (DANE) show the following trends between 1992 and 1996:

(a) Labour participation rates of children and young people (between the ages of 12 and 17) have been dropping, while school enrolment rates have risen. This has been the case by age, sex and area;

(b) Participation rates are higher in rural areas and are higher among males than among females. However, the length of the working day is significantly higher among urban females and rural males;

(c) School attendance by children is constantly increasing. Enrolment rates have gone up, while studying as the only activity is becoming increasingly important;

(d) The occupational structure has not changed. Agricultural activities predominate among rural males, while a predominant number of young urban males are manual workers and urban females are employed primarily in the services sector;

(e) The length of the working day has decreased. However, the working day is still very long for children and young workers, particularly urban girls and rural boys. This is linked to the occupational structure by sex and area;

(f) The reduction of the working day has led to a reduction in the proportion of children and young people whose working day is longer than the legal limit;

(g) Social and institutional awareness of the magnitude and severity of the problem of child labour has increased;

(h) There is greater political commitment, both nationally and regionally, to the prevention and elimination of child labour;

(i) The network of agencies with jurisdiction to prevent and eliminate child labour has been strengthened and this is reflected in the formulation of better policies, strategies and programmes and improvements in their implementation;

(j) There is closer coordination between the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, project No. Col. 1951003 and the International Labour Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC);

(k) The participation of employers' and workers' organizations in combating child labour has become more active;

(l) Specific strategies and instruments have been designed to develop the national policy defined in this regard;

(m) The decentralization of the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Child Labour and the Protection of Young Workers has begun;

(n) Priorities for action have been drawn up and a start has been made on planning four action models for prevention and elimination;

(o) The Active Search and Comprehensive Care Programme for children and young workers is in operation;

(p) An inter-agency body with the necessary authority and tools to define and approve programmes of action in accordance with the procedures laid down by IPEC already exists;

(q) National data on child labour have been upgraded in terms of statistics, programmes and documentation. A periodic quantitative measurement tool exists on the child labour situation and new data-collection instruments have been developed;

(r) A start has been made on improving legislation on the prevention, elimination and monitoring of child labour;

(s) A body responsible for defining social mobilization policies relating to the elimination of child labour already exists;

(t) The mass media have been made aware of the issue;

(u) The number of outreach workers trained in the promotion and protection of children's rights and, in particular, in the elimination of child labour has been increased;

(v) A joint work plan was defined by the Ministers of Labour and employers' and workers' representatives in the Ibero-American region;

(w) Activities were carried out to promote the Colombian part of the Global March against Child Labour.

Article 33

Protection against the use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

Background to treatment for the prevention of drug addiction

360. For a long time, understanding of the drug problem was limited to an analysis of the forms consumption takes and the pathological and individual characteristics of the addict's behaviour, which could be dealt with in two ways: through rehabilitation or through punishment.

361. Consumption is now considered from a more comprehensive point of view, which has made it possible to move towards a holistic understanding of the problem, the analysis of which covers, inter alia, inter-personal relationships, the environment, quality of life and culture. Within this frame of reference, consumption is assumed to be the result of inter-personal relationships and it must therefore be approached as a problem with multiple causes in connection with which account must be taken of the social structure and social conflicts.

362. In Colombia, efforts to draw attention to the drug problem were first made in the 1980s and were part of an approach to drug addiction or narcotics dependency that ranged from the rejection of drug use based on fear to the strengthening of the family, recreational activities, etc.

363. Most campaigns were aimed at potential users, i.e. young people, and monitoring bodies, including parents and teachers.

364. With the 1989 "Drugs are violence" campaign, it was admitted for the first time that the problem takes various forms and has different social consequences, including the violence in Colombia.

365. The experience of European and American countries showed that the effectiveness of initiatives against drug abuse lay not in large quantities of messages with intimidating slogans about the harmful effects of drugs, but in the mobilization of emotions and the solidarity which can be achieved with such messages by using simple statements in a more informative than educational propositional structure (problem-proposal), designed to change attitudes and perceptions.

366. The messages were supposed to stress the strengthening of the potential of individuals and groups in order to make them less vulnerable and increase their independent response capacity. Action was to be taken at the root of the problem, i.e. in the context in which individuals live. This approach can be implemented only on the basis of decentralization and community participation.

367. From this point of view, prevention is understood as the promotion of personal and social conditions to deal adequately with situations that are inevitable and to create solutions for overcoming problems relating to drug addiction.

368. These requirements lead to the concept of comprehensive prevention, which refers to action to influence the social context through community participation in preventive activities, with expert advice and assistance. This concept is designed to explain the interdependence, potential and possibilities available to individuals, to change their role as "actors standing by passively as problems arise" and to focus on their strengths.

369. In institutional terms, comprehensive prevention means joint management, i.e. collective and mutually responsible action by specialized professionals, officials, leaders and the community in general. In this way, community participation and joint management will ensure continuous and repeated action and the consolidation of its effects.

370. Preventive action aims to provide citizens with training in day-to-day situations and to cover all the activities in which they may be involved. To this end, inter-personal and group communication must be promoted, experience, interests and know-how encouraged on a collective basis, discussion, joint activity, organization and participation groups established, agency-community joint management given impetus and inter-agency coordination promoted.

Colombia's commitment vis-à-vis the international drugs problem: the National Plan

371. The plan started in 1995 and is the policy framework for a comprehensive approach to the production, distribution and consumption aspects of the problem. Its objective is to tackle and gradually and systematically reduce the causes and manifestations of the drug problem by using community participation machinery to involve civil society in the solution of the problem.

372. Five courses of action are proposed:

Strengthening justice, including enforcement and prosecution policies and changes in the administration of justice;

Control and prohibition, including policies to eradicate illegal crops, destroy systems for the domestic distribution and export of drugs, trace the proceeds from drug trafficking, characterize money laundering as an offence and prosecute the drug cartels;

Alternative development: implementation through the National Alternative Development Plan (PLANTE);

Prevention and rehabilitation: State action to prevent drug use, rehabilitate drug addicts, provide special attention for vulnerable groups and carry out large-scale educational activities, particularly for young people;

International cooperation, involving a policy of international responsibility whereby the international community approaches the drug problem as a transnational phenomenon with multiple causes.

373. The plan provides for the following strategies to implement these policies:

Democratization and strengthening of civil society: by reinforcing areas of participation to guarantee collective action and mutual responsibility;

Decentralization: by determining the limits of national and regional jurisdiction. In the context of the National Plan, the Sectional Narcotic Drugs Councils define departmental policy in accordance with the policy defined nationally and ensure that it is reproduced at the municipal and local levels;

Research: in this context, means follow-up to developments in the different aspects of the problem;

Inter-agency consultation and coordination: propose the rationalization of available resources, the identification of situations in each individual context and the clarification of the responsibility of each person involved;

Communication: seeks to inform and educate both the public in general and agencies about the study and development of the problem, thus encouraging the participation of the various sectors;

Multilateralization: aims to reconcile, harmonize and implement the policies of all States in the international community. It will promote the introduction of programmes to monitor drug trafficking at points of origin and destination, the strengthening of the administration of justice, the adoption of efficient means of reducing demand and the creation of multilateral channels of communication.

374. The National Narcotic Drugs Council is in charge of implementing the National Plan through the National Narcotic Drugs Department as the body responsible for implementing the policies drawn up by the Government.

375. The models for action will be the regional, departmental and local plans and programmes and projects provided for in the political guidelines of the National Plan.

Prevention and rehabilitation

376. The National Narcotic Drugs Department[25] has planned coordination strategies for the decentralization of policies, the participation of organized civil society and the strengthening of government jurisdiction in respect of prevention and treatment:

Coordination for the decentralization of policies: is taking place in 14 departments, selected in view of the complexity and the serious nature of the problem and the political will of the actors involved in carrying out these activities. Coordination activities are implemented by organizing bodies and social actors, such as the Sectional Narcotic Drugs Councils, the Technical and Administrative Units for Comprehensive Prevention and the Committees for Prevention and Treatment, whose role commits them to taking action to deal with the problem;

Participation of organized civil society: the Colombian network for a comprehensive approach to the unlawful use of psychoactive substances was established in November 1996 and is composed of 26 governmental and non-governmental organizations. The network's purpose is to strengthen these agencies and will involve at least 100 by next year.

Strengthening of government jurisdiction, including the following types of action:

Community preventive care, which operates through the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, with the family and the community and prevention and treatment programmes for children and the family;

Encouragement to young people and comprehensive prevention through the Vice-Ministry of Youth of the Ministry of Education. The training of teachers who are aware of the issue is encouraged in education;

Promoting preventive strategies for young people at risk of becoming involved in the drug problem, in coordination with the Vice-Ministry of Youth of the Ministry of Education. Preventive activities are carried out among young people not enrolled in school;

Comprehensive prevention among the prison population, in coordination with the National Penitentiary and Prison Institute (INPEC). The programme being implemented covers education and prevention of consumption, as well as rehabilitation.

Institutional prevention programmes

377. Institutional prevention plans are in operation within the political and administrative framework proposed by the National Plan and in coordination with the National Narcotic Drugs Department. Their common feature is the idea of comprehensive prevention and inter-institutionality or joint management. This means that their main target is the context in which people live and in which there is a possibility of interaction with drugs. These projects are therefore coordinated and, at various stages, have had the collaboration of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the National Planning Department.

Coordinated Unit for Comprehensive Prevention (UCPI)

378. UCPI, a programme of the Office of the Mayor of Santa Fe de Bogotá, acts as a special unit for prevention problems and as an administrative office for the coordination of links with other bodies concerned with prevention activities.

379. In view of the cultural and social nature of drug use, UCPI concentrates on localities as the scenario for harmonizing and managing preventive action in the context of the decentralization and citizen participation policies proposed in the Constitution.

380. UCPI's activities focus on the areas referred to below.

381. The education sector. Training is offered in the psycho-physiological and neurological aspects of psychoactive substances, toxicity, addiction and vulnerability caused by use and abuse. Emphasis is placed on sociocultural aspects of the consumption of psychoactive substances among young people (propitious environments, user characteristics, etc). With regard to drug-related problems, the topics discussed with young people and teachers include: problems of urban youth (particularly in low-income sectors), dealing responsibly with sexuality, family communication for the prevention of consumption, authoritarianism, etc.

382. The community sector. In Bogota's slum areas, UCPI opts for a more comprehensive picture of young people and calls on government bodies to develop preventive programmes in full consultation with organized and informal youth groups in slum areas. Preventive projects are developed on the basis of community potential, which acts as a protective barrier against drug use.

383. Youth clubs. Young club members are given training in the management of their projects and in drafting plans and programmes to submit to the different bodies as part of the institutionalization process.

384. The most vulnerable population groups: street people, street children ("gamines"), refuse pickers, female sex workers, prisoners, youth gangs and groups in the process of social rehabilitation and reintegration: educational projects for work and production, workshops for the comprehensive prevention of drug dependence and related factors, training in specific areas for developing alternative forms of prevention, such as artistic expression, self-esteem and good neighbourliness.

385. Education for work and production. This is being done through consultation and training in technical aspects of production in order to train outreach workers who will continue to carry out preventive and productive activities which may improve the income of family and community groups.

386. Information and guidance for citizens. Mobile information kiosks are used wherever there are large numbers of people, particularly young people, and relocated once the user public has been covered. UCPI headquarters receives community leaders, university students and schoolchildren and the population in general. Printed material is also distributed to organizations and NGOs and support and reference services are provided to rehabilitation agencies.

387. Large-scale awareness-raising and sensitization campaigns. Different communications resources are used, such as public events (fairs, forums, district and local meetings), dissemination in the mass media and community media (press, radio and television) and distribution of printed material (banners, stickers, posters and calendars).

388. Production of educational material. Printed and audiovisual material is distributed on conceptual and methodological aspects regularly used in preventive projects. This includes the "Prevenir es construir futuro" (Prevention means building a future) series,[26] which describes progress on ongoing activities and reports on UCPI's work.

Liaison Project (Ministry of Communication)[27] [28]

389. The aim of the project is communication to solve the drug problem. This is an attempt to facilitate and promote participation by all in working out social development and monitoring alternatives which will close off possibilities for the drug problem to grow and multiply.

390. From this point of view, prevention campaigns should not stress the negative elements which make the issue a matter of concern for Colombians, but should, rather, propose positive alternatives to break through general indifference in this regard. Efforts should also be made to ensure that citizens, young people and children know about machinery and forums for participation where possible solutions to the problem may be discussed and devised.

391. The areas of work are:

Production of messages in the mass media (radio, television, press and printed material in general):

Distribution of personalized newsletters, games and posters nationally and internationally, to cover the mass media, NGOs, schools, universities, ministries, governors' offices, mayors' offices, embassies and community projects and officials;

A series of documentaries is being produced on specific experiences of efforts to solve the drug problem for broadcasting on national and regional television channels and in the video libraries of documentation centres;

Mass campaigns, including advertising on radio, television and in the press and other media, covering various aspects of the problem and their multiple causes.

Advisory services in planning and implementing communications strategies: this project involves efforts to make the best possible use of communications as a process of exchanging know-how with executive and technical teams and users of plans relating to work on solving the drug problem; advisory services begin with a diagnosis of the context, needs and existing communications resources; they go on to plan the strategy proper and then proceed to the implementation phase.

Project for the comprehensive prevention of drug addiction (National Penitentiary and Prison Institute) (INPEC)[29]

392. This project is designed to reduce and prevent the consumption of psychoactive substances in the Colombian prison system by means of preventive action carried out at three levels with the voluntary participation of prisoners:

Primary prevention: to reduce risk factors which encourage non-consumers of psychoactive substances in prisons to start using them. Strategies planned:

> Personal development groups: to increase prisoners' ability to resist offers of drugs through participation in experience-sharing workshops, encounter groups, etc.;
>
> Induction: to reduce anxiety levels by providing information on the prevention programme in order to make room for the expression of feelings and allow timely intervention;
>
> Education and training groups: to provide objective information on risk factors leading to the process of addiction, on its consequences and on how to avoid drug-consumption.

Secondary prevention: aims to stop the deterioration of drug-using prisoners with problems and offers the following alternatives:

> Support groups: meetings of prisoners who are drug abusers to draw up short-term goals, to identify personal, institutional, family and group features relating to their addiction;
>
> Early reception: aimed at addicts and drug abusers among prisoners with a high risk of becoming addicts, to prepare, educate and train them to accept treatment in therapeutic communities.

Tertiary prevention: to provide prisoners who are addicted to psychoactive substances with a sequential therapeutic process so as to prepare them for social integration once they are released. This level has three phases:

Reception: a transition between early reception and therapeutic treatment with the aim of getting the imprisoned addict and his family to identify possible causes;

Therapeutic community: the aim is that, through ongoing occupational therapy, the resident should build up trust, respect, interest, responsibility, honesty and openness towards others;

Social reintegration: is designed to bring the resident face to face with his family and social nucleus, thus facilitating his reintegration.

393. The INPEC project for the comprehensive prevention of drug addiction is currently in operation in 21 prisons in 17 Colombian cities. Interdisciplinary teams, including custodial and surveillance personnel, are involved. The project implemented the third level of prevention in the Centre for the Treatment of Drug Addict Convicted Prisoners in Oriente Prison, Acacías, Meta.

394. The project also includes the half-yearly publication of the Revista Compromiso,[30] the quarterly publication of the Periódico Vox Populi and four radio stations

National Narcotic Drugs Fund (Ministry of Health)

395. The Ministry of Health provides advisory services to hospital and therapeutic centres and, through the National Narcotic Drugs Fund, periodically puts out specialized publications on the rational handling of drugs, the use and abuse of psychoactive substances and quality in the prescription of specially controlled drugs.

396. Through the Human Behaviour Programme and in collaboration with the Inter-American Children's Institute of the Organization of American States, the Ministry also published the Regional Manual of Participatory Preventive Education for Young People and Parents in 1996;[31] its purpose is to hold participatory educational encounters for the prevention of drug dependency, which are informal and attended by young people, children and parents in their home communities, including secondary schools, primary schools and community groups.

397. In order to achieve this objective, the Manual contains all the theoretical, methodological and technical elements required to carry out the main activity and for the follow-up and assessment of outreach activities. Such activities include prevention meetings with clearly defined thematic content and weekly outreach and extension course workshops, on the basis of proposals by participants.

Programme on young people and drug prevention (Vice-Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Education)[32]

398. The frame of reference for this programme is the National Youth Policy, which is based on recognition of children and young people as subjects of rights and duties for the purpose of creating appropriate conditions for young people to take part in and exercise full citizenship.

399. Another policy element that puts the programme into perspective is the General Education Act, or Act No. 115, of 8 February 1994, which lists training for the promotion and preservation of health and hygiene, the comprehensive prevention of problems relevant to society and the appropriate use of leisure time as the basic aims of education. Chapter III, article 12, of Decree No. 1108 of 31 May 1994 provides that all State and private educational establishments must include processes of comprehensive prevention in their Institutional Education Projects (PEI), based on Ministry of Education guidelines.

400. The key issue is drug abuse in schools and the resulting drug-related problem situations. The programme's overall target group is composed of three subgroups: students (of both sexes, aged 10 to 20), teachers and parents.

401. In the school environment, the programme's objective is to find means of preventing drug abuse by creating permanent structures for the analysis, discussion and handling of the problem and the "network for the training of educators for the prevention of drug abuse" was established for this purpose in four geographical areas: Atlántica, Andina Oriental, Andina Occidental and Territorios Nacionales.

402. The work is being done in educational establishments through the use of methodologies for inter-group, inter-agency and interdisciplinary activities on prevention in the school environment and for the identification of high-risk groups and populations with a view to the formulation of proposals.

403. In order to guarantee the continuity of the programme, teachers, pupils and parents are being trained to prevent drug abuse as an educational strategy and a response to the problem.

Articles 37 and 40

Protection against torture and inhuman or degrading treatment and unlawful or arbitrary detention, legal assistance to children deprived of their liberty and legality of legal procedures for their defence

404. The Juvenile Code contains specific provisions for separating the treatment of minors who have infringed the penal law from that applied to adults and ICBF therefore took steps to have all juvenile annexes in Colombian prisons closed. The last of the annexes, which was part of the Bogotá National Model Prison, was closed in January 1993. In order to defend minors who have committed or are accessories to criminal offences, a family ombudsman is appointed to watch over the interests of the young offender and ensure his proper treatment in the re-education programme to which he is assigned.

405. ICBF has also been encouraging open-type programmes so as to reduce closed institution admissions, which both the Convention and the Juvenile Code propose as a last resort when no other measure can be recommended. For 1997, 2,845 places were booked in the "assisted freedom programmes" for approximately 5,690 juvenile offenders, as well as approximately 2,000 handled directly in zonal centres.

406. The Constitution and the Juvenile Code take account of the provisions of article 40 of the Convention, which govern procedures involving the competent authorities (see preceding report) and according to which every minor is assisted by a family ombudsman.

407. ICBF pays for care for juvenile offenders in the various specialized institutional and open programmes used in re-education; it requires compliance with guarantees of the minors' rights and comprehensive protection while they are being cared for.

408. The only provision of article 40 of the Convention not in force in our legislation is the right to the double-hearing principle, which is to be included in the Juvenile Code reform bill, discussed earlier in this report.

Article 38

Respect for international humanitarian law relevant to the child and armed conflicts

409. On 26 January 1990, Colombia signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989 and incorporated into Colombian legislation under Act No. 12 of January 1991.

410. Article 38, paragraphs 2 and 3, stipulate that States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 15 years do not take a direct part in hostilities and that they shall refrain from recruiting them into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of 15 years, but who have not attained the age of 18 years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.

411. On signing the Convention, the Government of Colombia made a declaration in which it considered that "while the minimum age of 15 years for taking part in armed conflicts, set forth in article 38 of the Convention, is the outcome of serious negotiations which reflect various legal, political and cultural systems in the world, it would have been preferable to fix that age at 18 years in accordance with the principles and norms prevailing in various regions and countries, including Colombia, for which reason the Government of Colombia, for the purposes of article 38 of the Convention, shall construe the age in question to be 18 years". It will be noted that the declaration refers only to "taking part in armed conflict", but does not mention recruitment.

412. In depositing its instrument of ratification of the Convention in January 1991, the Government of Colombia entered a reservation to the provisions of these paragraphs, stating that the age referred to should be understood to be 18 years.

413. Paragraph 2 expressly prohibits minors from taking a direct part in hostilities and paragraph 3 prohibits recruiting them. The latter provision is, however, not formulated generally, but only as a prohibition on recruiting children for the purpose of taking a direct part in hostilities.

414. When it withdrew its reservation on 26 June 1996, the Government of Colombia issued a political declaration stating that it would refrain from recruiting young people under 18 years of age into its armed forces or police for the purpose of taking a direct part in hostilities.

415. With regard to paragraph 3, the Government stated that in accordance with the legislation in force, all Colombian males have the obligation to clarify their military situation as soon as they reach the age of majority, except for school leaving certificate students who do so on obtaining their certificate. If they are under age at that time they will be recruited into the armed forces or police only to provide support services or as logistics, administrative or social service auxiliaries, unless they express a deliberate wish to serve in another area and it is considered appropriate to assign them to that service because they have the required qualifications.

416. On 26 October 1997, elections were held for town councils, departmental assemblies, mayors and governors. The "Mandate for peace, life and freedom" campaign was organized on the same day, and more than 8 million Colombians voted for the items on the agenda it contained, such as the non-involvement of minors in Colombia's conflict, the elimination of abductions and enforced disappearances and the commitment to combating displacement, thus saying "no" to violence.

417. This mass action created fresh impetus for the movement to deal with the armed conflict and, at the same time, reflected the desire for prompt and effective measures to keep minors away from the conflict and from taking part in it.

418. In view of the declaration made when the reservation to the Convention was withdrawn, and in order to respond to the "Mandate for peace", articles 13 and 14 were added to Act No. 418 on coexistence and public order, approved by the President of the Republic on 26 December 1997. These articles provide that minors who complete their studies may choose whether they will perform their compulsory military service immediately, with their parents' consent and in areas not involved in the armed conflict, or whether they will perform it later once they have reached the age of majority. They read:

> "Chapter 2: Provisions to protect minors from the effects of armed conflict
>
> Article 13. Minors under 18 years of age shall not be called up for military service. Students in eleventh grade who are under age and are selected for military service under Act No. 48 of 1993 shall have their call-up postponed until they reach the age of majority, unless they voluntarily choose to fulfil their constitutional obligation immediately with the express written consent of their parents. In such cases, under-age recruits may not be assigned to areas where war operations are taking place or employed in armed conflict operations.
>
> If, on reaching the age of majority, a young person who has postponed his military service is enrolled in an undergraduate programme in a higher education institution, he shall have the option of serving immediately or of postponing his service until he has completed his studies.
>
> Should he choose to serve immediately, the educational institution shall reserve his place for him under the same conditions; should he choose to postpone his service, his degree may be awarded only once he has completed his military service as the law requires. The interruption of higher studies shall make the obligation to perform military service enforceable. Any civil or military authority failing to apply this provision shall be charged with misconduct punishable by dismissal.
>
> Article 14. Any person who recruits minors as members of rebel or self-defence groups, forces them to join such groups or receives them into such groups and any persons who give them military training for that purpose shall be liable to three to five years' imprisonment.

> Paragraph. Members of outlaw armed organizations who recruit young persons under eighteen (18) years of age into said organizations shall not be entitled to the legal benefits for which this Act provides."

419. Colombia acceded to Protocol Additional I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, which entered into force on 1 March 1994. It also deposited its instrument of accession to Protocol Additional II to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 on 14 August 1995, without reservations of any kind. This Protocol, relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts, entered into force on 15 February 1996. Its provisions are thus applicable throughout the national territory, as is understood by government officials and by the members of the armed forces, in particular.

420. ICBF has played an active role in the inter-agency process to ensure the implementation of international humanitarian law, particularly with regard to the non-involvement of minors in armed conflict.

Care of children and adolescents who have been detached from the armed conflict

421. Different ICBF programmes are currently taking care of some 250 children who have been detached from subversive groups.

422. Various bodies involved in the issue drew up an "Agreement on wishes" on behalf of children affected by Colombia's violence, the main objectives of which are to work for children so that they can become a sector of the civilian population that is free from conflict; to protect them fully from the war; and to give them access to basic services to guarantee their survival, well-being and development. Such bodies are also trying to launch specific programmes with a view to better care for children as a vulnerable sector of the population.

423. In order to implement this agreement, the care and work or vocational training programme has been established for children and under-18s who have been detached from the conflict.

424. An education fund has also been set up by the Ministry of Education, which has authorized a special national programme of basic and intermediate education.

425. The bodies working to fulfil their commitment to protect minors affected by the conflict include the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, which takes in young people who have been detached from the conflict and tries to include them in prevention and protection programmes, and the Social Solidarity Network, which cares for victims of violence and, through its rehabilitation programme, enables children and under-18s who have been detached from the conflict to obtain access to established programmes and benefits and supports their admission to the formal educational alternatives identified jointly with the Ministry of Education.

426. The magnitude of the problem also showed that there was a need for an investigation of the family structure of young people involved in the conflict.

427. To meet this concern, the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace has been sponsoring international humanitarian law seminars, with the participation of the Colombian Red Cross, for various sectors of the community. The seminars are based on the provisions of the Additional Protocols to the four Geneva Conventions, with special emphasis on internal armed conflict. They provide materials and teach children how to use them. The purpose is to teach the civilian population about its rights so that it can assert those rights vis-à-vis persons taking part in the armed conflict.

428. In order to give this problem the institutional focus it needs, the Ministry of Justice and Law has been working with the Colombian Family Welfare Institute to remove children from the conflict. Specifically, contact has been made with outlaw groups in order to speed up the implementation of the humanitarian agreements and give effect to article 38 of the Convention, but there have been no results apart from the release of a few children in the case of the National Liberation Army (ELN).

Child victims of anti-personnel mines

429. All children can obtain humanitarian assistance as a result of the agreement between the Social Solidarity Network and the Colombian Red Cross. They also have the possibility of receiving educational assistance under Decree No. 2231 of 1989, Decree No. 48 of 1990 and Act No. 241 of 1995. The Government took out a personal accident insurance policy through the Social Solidarity Network in order to protect members of the civilian population who have experienced loss or injury as a result of acts of violence provided for in Act No. 241 of 1995.

Displaced children

430. The State is trying to deal with the problem comprehensively, in the context of the National Development Plan, which is part of the National Programme of Comprehensive Care for the Population Displaced by Violence. The objectives of the Programme include prevention, immediate care with legal protection measures, socio-economic consolidation and stabilization and research on the problem.

431. The Programme is being implemented by a number of agencies according to need. The Ministry of Education is thus working on education for children affected by the armed conflict since 1989.

Abduction

432. The Presidential Programme for the Defence of Personal Freedom was established to put an end to the problem of abduction. Since 1993, it has been implementing psychosocial care programmes for children who are the victims of abduction or who have experienced the abduction of relatives in the capitals of some of the country's departments. It is also working on a plan to prevent the abduction of children, to be implemented in connection with psychological care.

survey" and "Juvenile protection policies", by means of which it supports teachers' work in handling conflicts at school and provides realistic information on the risks faced by young people. The aim is to draw up public prevention policies.

Article 42

Making the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known

434. The Office of the Presidential Adviser for Social Policy prepared a training plan on "The rights of children", which was implemented by various national bodies (Ministry of Justice and Law, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, Colombian Family Welfare Institute, Office of the Ombudsman, Office of the Presidential Adviser for Social Policy and the International Red Cross).

435. The plan provided information on and publicized the rights of children, as well as ways of protecting those rights and guaranteeing their full exercise. As at 31 December 1997, workshop-seminars had been held in 27 of the country's 32 departments and a network of more than 600 outreach workers had been set up to publicize children's rights.

436. This year, workshop-seminars will be held in the five remaining departments and the network will have 850 outreach workers. Ten thousand copies of the Convention on the Rights of the Child were distributed to "target groups", such as educators, parents, community mothers, doctors, health officials, juvenile magistrates, juvenile police, family ombudsmen, family commissioners and the community in general. This target population was invited to the workshop-seminars and makes up the network of outreach workers.

437. A teaching booklet was prepared to assist these workers in their task of publicizing children's rights and in their role as an active group watching over children's rights. The booklet contained Act No. 294 of 1996 on violence within the family and Act No. 311 of 1996, which established the National Family Protection Register. It is important to note the Act No. 294 of 1996 classifies violence within the family as an offence.

438. The Colombian Government has drawn up a broad inter-State cooperation agenda in order to implement the provisions of the Convention. Mention may be made of the Second American Meeting on Children and Social Policy - Agenda 2000: Children Now, which took place in Santa Fe de Bogotá in April 1994. During this meeting, the representatives of the Governments attending signed the Nariño Accord, thereby reaffirming their obligations under the agreements signed at the 1990 World Summit for Children.

439. During the meeting, it was stated that social and economic policy should focus on human development and that action must be taken at the stage of childhood in order to guarantee fair and sustainable development; measures were proposed to deal with the structural factors of poverty and ensure the efficiency and productivity of the economy.

The Accord thus reiterates the goals of the Summit in relation to:

(a) Health and nutrition;

(b) Drinking water and environmental sanitation;

(c) Education;

(d) Civic rights;

(e) Follow-up and assessment.

Its contribution is that it sets some of these goals specifically for the Americas, particularly in respect of education and civic rights.

440. With a view to the achievement of these goals, especially the last one, and in the light of the offer by Guatemala, the pro tempore America-Colombia Secretariat, and the UNICEF Inter-agency Coordination Secretariat, supported the holding of the technical meeting on children and social policy as the follow-up to the Nariño Accord and in preparation for the Fifth Ibero-American Summit, held in Antigua, Guatemala, in August 1995. The main objective was to work together to build up information systems for the follow-up of regional and national goals to ensure that all children in the Americas may live a full life.

441. Other purposes of the event were: to encourage countries to strengthen information and follow-up machinery for regional goals; to analyse the methodologies, information sources, variables and indicators that countries are using to measure progress in achieving goals; and to foster an exchange of experiences and information by countries and identify areas in which countries require more support from cooperation agencies.

442. The Technical Secretariat designed a questionnaire as the main instrument for assessing the state of national systems of information and indicators for the follow-up of the goals of the Nariño Accord, and collecting information from the various American countries on their experience in the monitoring and follow-up of the indicators in question.

443. In order to meet the commitment made by Colombia at the World Summit for Children in 1990, a cross-sectoral plan was formulated for its implementation within 10 years. Its main objective was to improve conditions for children in terms of health, nutrition, drinking water and basic sanitation, education and special protection through joint efforts by the State and civil society. A diagnosis of the situation of children and adolescents was made on the basis of PAFI, plans, programmes and projects were defined for the comprehensive development of this population group and goals were set for 1998 and 2000.

Notes

[1] In 1996, vaccination programmes for children under five achieved coverage of 83.58 per cent for polio, 83.05 per cent for DTP, 93.65 per cent for measles and 93.87 per cent for BCG.

[2] For Latin America as a whole, the mortality rates for 1992 were 20 and 39 per thousand for children under five and infants under one year of age, respectively. Colombia comes behind Cuba, Costa Rica and Chile where child mortality is concerned, but slightly ahead of Argentina and well ahead of Mexico, Peru and the Dominican Republic.

[3] Lucero Zamudio. Las familias de hoy en Colombia (Present-day families in Colombia). Office of the President of the Republic, Office of the Presidential Adviser for Social Policy, Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF), 1994.

[4] In 1991, the child mortality rate was estimated at 30 per thousand live births. The health services have not achieved the desirable level of universality, solidarity, effectiveness and efficiency, the worse affected being children in rural areas, the Pacific and Atlantic regions, the new departments and the poverty belts around the major cities.

[5] The average breastfeeding period fell from 11 months in 1976 to 8 months in 1998. DRIPAN meeting, 1976; Study on prevalence, demography and health, 1990. Profamilia.

[6] National survey of health knowledge, attitudes and practices, 1986-1990.

[7] Some studies have found a prevalence of endemic goitre greater than 25 per cent in areas such as Yopal, Chámeza and Santafé de Bogotá.

[8] ICBF, Community Homes Survey, 1994.

[9] El Salto Educativo (The leap in education), CONPES document No. 2738, October 1994.

[10] Ill-treatment, homicide and accidents, ibid.

[11] Felicia Knaul, Survey of children and young people in especially difficult circumstances. High risk, National Planning Department, 1992.

[12] Ministry of Health, Survey on Mental Health and Consumption of Psychoactive Substances, 1993.

[13] Carmen Elisa Flórez et al., Quantitative analysis of child and youth labour in Colombia, 1994.

[14] Study by the Colombian Episcopate, Bogotá, 1995.

[15] ICBF Management 1992-1994. Plan of Action "Children First". Office of the Ombudsman, Studies on disability, 1993.

[16] Until 1992, children between the ages of 12 and 16 experiencing behavioural problems were cared for by ICBF and offenders between the ages of 16 to 18 by the Ministry of Justice in prison annexes.

[17] Recent study by the Office of the Juvenile and Family Procurator covering all children's courts and family courts of combined jurisdiction in the country.

[18] CONPES document No. 2787, Ministry of Health, ICBF, DNP: UDS-PAFI, Santa Fe de Bogotá D.C., 7 June 1995.

[19] The language of the Embera indigenous community, which lives in the north-west, in the department of Chocó, especially in the Urabá region on the border with Panama.

[20] UNICEF, The State of the World's Children, 1997, pp. 52, 56-57.

[21] The coverage level for 1998 is a projected figure based on data from the first quarter. Coverage levels are for children one year old and under.

[22] Department of Promotion and Prevention, Infectious Pathologies Programme, Ministry of Health, 1998.

[23] An environmental and social "clean production" programme, currently involving 77 companies.

[24] According to official data, children take part in the mining of coal for domestic use, which accounts for 16 per cent of the total amount of coal mined in Colombia. Of this 16 per cent, 83 per cent comes from mines operating legally which do not use child labour; children are found working in the remaining 17 per cent of mines which operate illegally. The coal mined with the use of child labour accounts for 0.67 per cent of the total amount of coal produced by Colombia; this is the area targeted by the Ecocarbon programme for the elimination of child labour.

[25] Prevention and rehabilitation activities of the National Narcotic Drugs Department, report by the Planning Office of the National Narcotic Drugs Department, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 1997.

[26] "Prevención Integral en Santa Fe de Bogotá" (Comprehensive prevention in Santa Fe de Bogotá), Prevenir es Construir Futuro series No. 12, Office of the Mayor of Santa Fe de Bogotá and the Comprehensive Prevention and Coordination Unit, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 1996.

[27] "Claves de Comunicación para la Superación del Problema de la Droga" (Keys to communication for solving the drug problem), Ministry of Communication and Liaison Project, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 1996.

[28] "RED: Comunicación de Doble Via" (Network: two-way communication), Liaison Project bulletin, Nos. 16-23, 1995-1997.

[29] "Por una Libertad sin Drogas" (For freedom without drugs), National Penitentiary and Prison Institute, Santa Fe de Bogotá, 1996.

[30] Revista Compromiso, National Penitentiary and Prison Institute (INPEC), No. 3, November 1996 and special edition of December 1996.

[31] Regional Manual of Participatory Preventive Education for Young People and Parents, programme for the prevention of drug dependency, Inter-American Children's Institute; Human Behaviour Programme, Ministry of Health, Santa Fe de Bogotá, December 1996.

[32] Programme on Young People and Drug Prevention, Report of the Vice-Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Education, Bogotá, 1997.

List of annexes*

El Salto Social (The Social Leap)

CONPES document No. 2787 of 7 June 1995

Survey of children and adolescents

Children's Covenant

Management report of the Inter-Agency Committee to Combat the Traffic in Women and Children

Document on the follow-up to the goals of the Nariño Accord

Report by the National Police

Report by the Ministry of Education on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Youth Act No. 375 of 1997

Act No. 418 of 1997

Act No. 115 of 1994

Act No. 30 of 1992

Act No. 311 of 1996

Act No. 294 of 1996

Juvenile Code bill

Follow-up to the commitments of the 1990 Summit

Displaced persons - the Colombia we cannot ignore

Memorandum of the Regional Summit for Children

Guide for Colombians abroad by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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* The annexes may be consulted in the Secretariat files.

Sexual offences pamphlet

Child protection campaign - DAS

"Children's Covenant" magazine

Family Welfare Community Homes pamphlet

Pamphlet on the rural food voucher

Handbook on the registration and identity card campaign for indigenous communities

Binational civil registry and identification campaign pamphlet for the border region

Pamphlet on the sexual abuse of children

Leaflet on Anti-abduction security measures
